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**THE INDIA OF THE QUEEN**

**A HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA.**

By **SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., &c.**

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# THE INDIA OF THE QUEEN

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY THE LATE  
SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER  
K.O.S.I., C.I.E., LL.D., &c.

EDITED BY LADY HUNTER  
WITH AN  
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## DEDICATION

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*I dedicate these Essays to the dear memory of their Author, who loved the races of India, and ever strove to reveal their needs and aspirations to his countrymen.*

*J. H.*





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## INTRODUCTION

‘I do love these Indian races so much, and I do so long to obtain a hearing for India in Europe!’ Thus wrote Sir William Hunter in early manhood, when the glamour of the East fell upon him and inspired the guiding principles of his strenuous career. They were ‘first to enable England to learn India’s wants; next to help England to think fairly of India; and, finally, to make the world feel the beauty and pathos of Indian life.’ The firstfruits of this resolve were seen in the ‘Annals of Rural Bengal,’ which told the ryot’s simple story and the blind struggles of his masters at the dawn of British rule. For more than a third of a century no year passed by without its contribution to Indian literature from the same practised and sympathetic pen. Apart from his books, which would fill a library, Sir William Hunter’s many-sided energy found an outlet in journalism; and many of his *ephemerides* have a value extending far beyond the day for which they were written. Lady Hunter has made a selection of the most noteworthy; and she is deeply indebted to the editors of ‘The Times,’ the ‘Pioneer’ of Allahabad, the ‘Nineteenth Century,’ the ‘Fortnightly’ and ‘Contemporary’ Reviews: to Messrs. Smith & Elder and Messrs. W. H. Allen & Co. for permission to reproduce them in a permanent form.

In 1887 Sir William Hunter bade farewell to the land which he had served so well, and returned to English life. A time when the innermost fibres of our national existence were stirred by the first Jubilee was propitious for a review of the

changes which had passed over India during the Victorian era. He complied with a request that he should describe them in 'The Times'; and 'The India of the Queen' afforded him some solace in the deep distress caused by the loss of his only daughter. These brilliant essays were published in the leading journal between November 4 and December 8, 1887; and they attracted wide notice by the grace of their style and the sympathy which thrills in every line. 'The Expansion of India,' with which the series opens, enunciates a truth which had been grasped by no previous writer. As in physics the greater attracts the less, so the possession of India had, in fifty years, converted our group of islands set in a Northern sea from a European into an Asiatic Power. Russia is undergoing the self-same evolution, and the forces let loose in its progress will change the whole current of civilisation. In India the process has assumed three well-marked phases. The first was an era of conquest; and its presiding spirit was the Marquis of Dalhousie, whose life-story was told by Sir William Hunter in 1891. Entering on his high office with an earnest desire to promote peace and material progress, he believed himself compelled by the inexorable logic of events to annex the Punjab, Oudh, and the greater portion of Burma. This policy was one of the many causes of the cataclysm of 1857, which is a landmark in Indian history. Speaking broadly, the Mutiny came of an attempt to centralise while the moral and material appliances were wanting which alone could weld all India into a homogeneous whole. It was not merely difference of race and language which kept its peoples apart; for we have again and again seen alien communities knit together by loyalty to a common Head. Nor was it even divergence of religion, which is independent of racial distinctions and sometimes destroys them. The nations of India were isolated by the distances of their peninsula, which is fifteen times larger than the United Kingdom and is scarred by rivers and mountain ranges on an almost inconceivable scale. A strong central government became

possible only when railways and steam navigation had annihilated space and pierced the barriers erected by Nature. Nor, at Queen Victoria's accession, were moral influences more favourable to the rulers encamped, as it were, in the midst of a hostile population. Our hold on India was of the slightest. For the British public these distant possessions were a sealed book, and they were regarded as a close preserve for the Company's European servants. When an attempt was made to infringe this monopoly of office by the appointment to the covenanted service of Ram Mohan Ray's adopted son, it was hastily abandoned owing to the clamour evoked in Calcutta. The Feudatory Princes were thoroughly alarmed by Dalhousie's annexations; and each believed that his dynasty's interests were at the mercy of a foreigner's caprice. Intrigue and self-interest were rampant among them, and they agreed only in regarding every measure adopted by the intruders with intense suspicion. The masses were plunged in ignorance, a prey to fanaticism and unreasoning panics. Every reverse sustained by our arms during the campaigns undertaken by Amherst and Auckland was hailed throughout India with undisguised satisfaction. It is true that, for at least a generation before the Mutiny, higher instruction was within the reach of youths belonging to the wealthier classes; and that the foundations of a system of national education were laid in 1854. But its product served only to intensify the forces of revolt. The man who is now known to have prompted the Cawnpore massacres had been a pupil at a British college. De Tocqueville has pointed out that a weak government's period of greatest danger is that in which it attempts self-reform.

On the restoration of peace England made a determined attempt to set her Indian house in order. It is needless to recount the measures adopted with this end in view. Some of them have not stood the test of time, but others were inspired by true statecraft. An age of conquest was followed by one of consolidation, whose principles were typified by Lord Lawrence.

Its keynote was struck by the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. We learn from Mr. Sidney Lee's recent Biography how large a share her late Majesty took in framing the noble words which are regarded as their Magna Charta by educated Indians. The Princes received an assurance that the feudal right of annexing their territories on the failure of natural heirs would no longer be exercised. The people at large learnt that, as far as was possible, they would be admitted to a share in the task of government. These pledges have been fulfilled to the letter. The assumption of direct administration by the Crown resulted in the transfer of supreme control to the Secretary of State, who is answerable to Parliament for his action. In India all the threads of government were gathered up by the Viceroy, whose Council developed into a Cabinet on the European model. This tendency to centralise, which has robbed local officers of much of their prestige, was made possible by the network of railways which overspread the peninsula, and by its postal and telegraph services, which compare favourably with those of any country. The new ties forged by that great civiliser, commerce, were strengthened by the legal codes which are among the most precious legacies of the Victorian era. Like Justinian's 'Digest,' those masterpieces of lucidity and precision have given common ideals to communities opposed in race, religion, and language.

As the conscience of England awoke to a sense of her responsibilities towards this distant Empire it was felt that material bonds would not suffice to maintain a connection essential to the welfare of both. The outcome was a policy of reconciliation, which found its highest expression in Lord Mayo. While the nightmare of absorption was finally lifted from the Feudatories, educated Indians of every class gained a substantial share in the sweets of office. The masses were still unfit to participate in political power; and it was necessary to interpose an educative stage between the existing centralisation and a full recognition of the people's right to manage their local affairs. The series of measures introduced by Lord Ripon

was an attempt to bridge over this period of probation. Despite an undue preponderance of the legal element in the rural and municipal Boards established during his viceroyalty, the new organization has undoubtedly awakened a sense of public duty throughout the Empire.

Having traced the evolution of Victorian India, Sir William Hunter describes the forces brought into play and predicts their direction. Until the eve of the Mutiny such education as existed was on a purely religious basis. Now creeds originate in man's environment ; and, varying in grandeur with its influence, they become a potent factor in his physical and mental development. The essayist has seized the innermost spirit of Hinduism and Islam. He proves that both are strongly vital, that they retain a large measure of elasticity, and that they exercise a beneficent influence on aboriginal tribes who are haunted by the imaginary terrors of demon-worship. The British administrators' attitude towards these social forces is dictated by expediency, and its *rationale* was convincingly stated in the report of a great Education Commission which Sir William Hunter presided over in 1881. Our public instruction has thus been remodelled on a secular basis ; and the outcome is to be found in 'the upheaval of new ideas, the quickening of new social and political forces, and in the deadening of the old fanaticism, the dismemberment of the old superstitions, the death of old beliefs.'

Such is the New Leaven, which forms the subject of the fourth essay. The aspirations of an educated class are fraught with political danger, but they are, on the whole, preferable to those arising from bigotry and ignorance. The Princes have gained a loftier sense of duty towards their subjects and of loyalty to the Paramount Power. The imminence of a collision with Russia in 1885, and the war cloud which hung over the North-Western Frontier two years later, elicited a very different feeling from that which was excited by the old campaigns in Burma, Afghanistan, and the Punjab. The feudatory chiefs then vied with each other in proffering money and troops for

the Empire's defence. Sir William Hunter urged that advantage should be taken of these significant impulses ; that the armed rabble maintained by the Native States should be fashioned by European discipline into a second line of defence. The aspirations of the educated classes were formulated by the National Congresses which had met annually since 1885, and found in Sir William Hunter a doughty champion. He advocated the establishment of the Indian Councils on a representative basis, and claimed for them the right of interpellating the Government and criticising the budgets. The Secretary of State's council should, he thought, be strengthened by the infusion of an Indian element. Anticipating an event which was probably due to his prompting, he declared that any English constituency which should choose an Indian to represent it in Parliament would deserve well of the Empire.

'Popular Movements in India,' which appeared in the 'Contemporary Review' for February 1891, deals with the effect on our Eastern policy of the preceding essays. A well-equipped force 25,000 strong had been formed from the armies kept up in native States ; and the 'Imperial Service Troops' are a welcome addition to the Empire's defences. The defects of the system arise from the dearth of European officers and of medical equipment ; the mutual jealousies still felt by Indian Princes ; and the tendency shown by all volunteer organizations to fluctuate in interest and efficiency. The Congress agitation received a powerful stimulus from the publicity given to its propaganda by 'The Times.' Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, the member for Northampton, who was approaching the close of his stormy career, was the mouthpiece of the movement in Parliament. With the excessive zeal which is the demagogue's mark he had introduced a Bill during the session of 1890 which contemplated large additions to the strength of the Provincial Councils and a cut-and-dried system of electoral colleges bearing a fixed ratio to population. Sir William Hunter did not consider India ripe for numerical representation ; and gave his



support to a counter-proposal made by Lord Cross, who was then Secretary of State. Under his Bill, which was discussed by Parliament in 1890, the principle of election was restricted to municipalities, District Boards, and similar public bodies. The new departure was ultimately carried into effect by Lord Lansdowne, who also conceded the right of interpellating and of discussing the Budgets. It satisfies the political ambitions of educated Indians; but its value is lessened by the virtual monopoly of representation secured by the lawyer class.

The 'Ruin of Aurangzeb,' published in the 'Nineteenth Century' of May 1887, probably suggested the policy outlined in 'The India of the Queen.' It traces, with true poetic instinct, the story of an imperial bigot who sapped the whole fabric of Mughal rule by his lack of human sympathy and respect for alien creeds. A pregnant moral is drawn by the concluding sentence: 'It was by the alienation of the native races that the Mughal Empire perished; it is by the incorporation of those races into a loyal and a united people that the British rule will endure.' But the germs of the new policy of conciliation are to be found in 'England's Work in India,' which reproduced the substance of two lectures delivered at Edinburgh during the winter of 1879-80. The first was a counterblast to those mischievous and unpatriotic doctrines which proclaim to the world that England's hold on India is rooted in fraud and bloodshed and upheld by spoliation. The second lecture set forth the Empire's demands and the manner in which they might be met. Every measure proposed in 'The India of the Queen' was outlined in the earlier work.

Buckle's 'History of Civilization,' which made a deep impression on Sir William Hunter at the dawn of his active life, enlarges on the influences of physical environment in moulding the character of a nation. Modern thought inclines to a belief that, in the case of European communities, the historian laid undue stress on this factor. But it is admitted on all sides that Bengal is emphatically the offspring of its rivers, whose

mysterious workings appealed vividly to the poetry in Hunter's nature. The materials for 'A River of Ruined Capitals,' which appeared in the 'Nineteenth Century' of January 1888, were gathered during a tour undertaken in the preceding February through the upper reaches of the Hugli and its confluent. It shows the Gangetic Delta in the making, and recounts the efforts made by science to protect Calcutta, which is the last survivor of many great cities entombed in the treacherous flood.

'Our Missionaries' and 'A Forgotten Oxford Movement' deal with a subject which was very near their writer's heart. It has been said with perfect truth that the bent of every Anglo-Indian's career is determined at his first station. Sir William Hunter's began at Suri, the headquarters of a Baptist Mission whose venerable chief became one of his closest friends. The sympathy with missionary effort which he retained through life is rarely seen in Indian officers, whose attitude is coloured by the neutrality imposed on Government by the instinct of self-preservation. It bore fruit in 'The Old Missionary' (1889), a poem in prose which will keep his memory green for many a year to come. In February 1888 he lectured before the Society of Arts on 'The Religions of India,' and his peroration was a noble defence of missionary enterprise. 'Speaking as an Englishman,' he said, 'I declare my conviction that it is the highest modern expression of the worldwide national life of our age. I regard it as the spiritual complement of England's instinct for colonial expansion and imperial rule. And I believe that any falling off in England's missionary efforts will be a sure sign of swiftly-coming national decay.' In the following June he presided at the inaugural meeting of the Centennial Conference on Foreign Missions; and he discoursed on the same theme in the 'Nineteenth Century' for July 1888. His plea for support was tempered by sound common sense. Purge your propaganda, he said, of bigotry and cant; treat all organized religions with respect, and lay stress on the spirit of Christianity rather than undiluted dogma.

The University of Oxford, which has been the birthplace of so many phases of our national life, has endowed India with a mission which regards alien creeds in a liberal spirit and seeks to win over the educated classes, not by declamation but by applying the Socratic method of argument. Until Sir William Hunter gave an account of 'A Forgotten Oxford Movement' in the 'Fortnightly Review' of May 1896, it was universally held that 1698 marked the origin of foreign missions. He showed that the movement dated back to 1681. Its founder was Dr. John Fell, one of the best-remembered of Oxford Bishops, whose fiery zeal induced the magnates of Leadenhall Street to employ their chaplains 'in the pious design of propagating the Christian religion in the East Indies.' This new departure soon spent its force. The pastors attached to the Company's semi-monastic factories in the East had their hands more than full in the ministrations required by their flocks, tempered with occasional lapses into commerce. Moreover, the band of merchants on whom the burden of empire was thrust eventually had to give pledges to respect the beliefs of their subjects.

The concluding sketch, 'A Pilgrim Scholar,' was published by the 'Pioneer' of Allahabad during the spring of 1885. The writer's personal tastes were certainly not those of the ascetic. Like Walter Savage Landor, he 'warmed both hands at the fire of life,' and valued it rather for the sensations with which it may be filled than for its length. But he had a true reverence for the ideals of self-sacrifice and self-devotion; and the career of the lonely Hungarian scholar who endured severe privations in the pursuit of science touched an inner chord in his nature. And we get a glimpse of Hunter's own mental struggles in his eloquent description of those of Csoma de Körös, who, 'in addition to his physical sufferings, had to wrestle with those spiritual demons of self-distrust, the bitter sense of the world's neglect, and the paralyzing uncertainty as to the value of his labours.' Such touches as these are in themselves sufficient warrant for rescuing this beautiful story from oblivion.

It has been truly remarked that Sir William Hunter was the discoverer of India in as real a sense as those early navigators who carried home such wondrous tales of its riches and glory. He left an enduring mark on its administration, and inspired his countrymen with a sentiment of its potentialities and grandeur. Had he survived to take part in the late imperial pageant he would have seen the full result of his teachings. He would have heard Lord Curzon of Kedleston proclaiming to the representatives of one-sixth of the human race assembled at Delhi that 'to the majority of these millions the King's Government has given freedom from invasion and anarchy; to others it has guaranteed their rights and privileges; to others it opens ever-widening avenues of honourable employment; to the masses it dispenses mercy in the hour of suffering, and to all it endeavours to give equal justice, immunity from oppression, and the blessings of enlightenment and peace. To have won such a dominion is a great achievement, to hold it by fair and righteous dealing is a greater; to weld it by prudent statesmanship into a single and compact whole will be, and is, the greatest of all.'

F. H. SKRINE.

# I

## THE INDIA OF THE QUEEN

# I

### THE EXPANSION OF INDIA

DURING the fifty years of Queen Victoria's reign, three vast enterprises have been going on in India—a work of conquest, a work of consolidation, and a work of conciliation. But, momentous as are the changes thus effected by the direct action of England's servants in the East, still graver national consequences have been brought about by the altered relations of India to Great Britain. In the early part of the reign the foreign policy of England was a policy of European responsibilities imposed by the Treaty of Vienna and bequeathed by Waterloo. During the latter part of the reign the foreign interests of England have been Asiatic interests, dominated by the requirements of an Asiatic frontier and by the necessity of a safe path to India. The Suez Canal is now a more powerful factor in England's attitude to the Great Powers than would be a dozen Spanish marriages. The occupation of Egypt has ousted from public view the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The neutralisation of Afghanistan has taken the place of the neutralisation of the Black Sea.

Not less imperative are the new military obligations laid upon England. Great Britain has become the recruiting ground for an army in Asia. Service with the Queen's colours now means chiefly service in India. Lord Wolseley has insisted on the duty of maintaining at home a number of infantry exceeding the whole battalions serving abroad, in order to supply the demand for mature troops capable of resisting hot climates

How seriously India intensifies this strain may be realised from the fact that in 1837 she only employed 19,000 men of the English Army, while in 1887 she requires 65,000. At the former period the East India Company had its separate European force, naval and military ; the whole burden of the British armament in India now falls upon the Queen's ships and the Queen's troops. But, the altered relations of India to Great Britain make themselves as acutely felt in the English farmhouse and market town as in the Foreign Office and at the Horse Guards. In 1837 India was a retail dealer in luxuries, sending away ten millions sterling a year of articles chiefly for the rich. In 1887 she appears as a wholesale exporter to the extent of about 90 millions sterling, a cotton spinner, and a cheap grain merchant on an enormous scale, supplying piece goods to the Asiatic market and food to the English labourer, in keen competition with the Norfolk wheat grower and the Lancashire mill hand. Above all, the control of India has passed during the fifty years from a limited body of experts in Leadenhall-street to the British Parliament and the nation at large.

I purpose to exhibit in their political aggregate the two-fold series of changes which have thus taken place—the changes in India and the changes in the relation of India to Great Britain. The occasion seems opportune for such a review. On the one hand, our Imperial dealings with India have given rise in England to diplomatic responsibilities and military exigencies formerly unknown, and involve a close Parliamentary supervision which, I believe, will shortly disclose new difficulties. On the other hand, we have reared up in India a population greatly in excess of the numbers that the country supported and fed under any previous rule. A small section of that population has been swiftly educated in the ideas which Europe conquered for herself by centuries of endurance and self-discipline. We have nurtured two generations of University youth in India on the strong meat of English political eloquence ; they quote to us the 'Areopagitica' of Milton, and the 'Representative Government' of Mill. But the mass of the people still remain face to face with the primitive struggle for existence in an Asiatic country—a struggle no longer mitigated for the survivors by the sharp Asiatic cauteries of unchecked famines and internal war. We

thus find ourselves confronted by a small but able and oratorical class, trained to political aspirations which the general state of India allows us only gradually to satisfy; a class keenly alive to the hard lot of the great body of their countrymen, well aware of the palliatives which representative institutions in England have applied to social suffering, and eager to be allowed to make trial of similar institutions for themselves.

The efforts of native gentlemen from India to win their way into Parliament form a new and significant feature in British electioneering. The presence of even two or three of these gentlemen in the House of Commons, if well informed as to the local facts, persistent in their demands, and united in action, might lead to important changes in our methods of Indian government. Foiled for the moment in their attempts with British constituencies, the educated natives have brought the whole weight of their influence to bear upon the Government in India. A Viceroy so firm and sagacious as Lord Dufferin has found it expedient to publicly try their claims to a larger share in the administration. During the past ten months a Commission on which the natives are ably represented has been hearing evidence throughout India. It will shortly re-assemble, with an ex-Lieutenant-Governor of well-known native sympathies as president, to settle its report. The Public Service Commission in India and the Indian candidates for Parliament at home are concurrent indications of a new force with which Indian statesmen have henceforth to reckon—namely, the fixed resolve of the educated natives to secure for themselves a larger share in the government of their country.

The problem of Indian statesmanship, as prescribed by the Queen's Proclamation and defined by pledges from her Ministers, is not how to resist these demands but how far it is safe to concede them. The British government of India must be a strong government, the British administration of India must be efficient. It is evident that constitutional checks well suited to a country like England, homogeneous as to its people and trained by 800 years of corporate action in peace and in war, might be dangerous for a congeries of long hostile races who, within the past century, and without any effort of their own, have been brought together under a central Government.

It is also evident that the central rulers, in considering the claims of any one class however intelligent and patriotic, must assure themselves that the vigour of the administration will not be impaired for the whole people. As long as the British nation guarantees, by its arms and diplomacy, the Indian races from external enemies, and as long as it stands responsible for the internal peace and good government of the country, so long must it adopt the means which seem to it best suited to these ends. But if it is to continue to rule in the spirit in which it has hitherto ruled, it must reconcile those means with the aspirations which its own example of constitutional government has created, and which its fearless system of Indian Public Instruction has deliberately encouraged, among the educated classes in India.

'The Times' has described in a series of brilliant letters the advancing prosperity of the United States. I think that no man with a practical experience of Indian legislation can have read without envy that marvellous record of national well-being. It is a record of internal progress (and by the word 'internal' I wish to reserve the question of external tariffs) made in harmony with economic laws, in a land which is still in excess of the needs of the people, and by a people who have adopted more thoroughly than any other race on earth the maxim of *Ubi bene ibi patria*. The progress of India during the past fifty years has been not less wonderful, and, considering the lower level from which India started, in some respects even more rapid. But in India the progress has been made, as regards the fundamental question of population, in defiance of economic laws, and in a land which no longer suffices for the wants of a people who cling to their place of birth with a tenacity unknown in any other country. America is an example of the excellent results to be obtained from putting new wine into new bottles. India illustrates the risk of putting new wine into old ones. In the present article I shall briefly show how, during Queen Victoria's reign, the vast receptacle was put together for the liquid. Subsequent articles will disclose the ferments which we have poured in, and will indicate some of the products which may be expected shortly to come out.



At the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 the map of India remained practically as it had been revised on the close of the Maratha war in 1818, the year before her Majesty's birth. An extension, insignificant in regard to population and revenue, had been made to the eastern frontier, and the people of the little State of Coorg had involuntarily sought the protection of British rule. The twenty years of calm ended suddenly in a war tempest, lasting over twenty years of disasters, victories, and annexation, and dying away only after the thunderclaps of the Mutiny had cleared the air. During the Queen's reign eight great wars have been waged in India, besides minor military operations sometimes of a difficult nature. Ten territories have been conquered or annexed, with a population of about 45 millions of people, and an area exceeding 400,000 square miles. Sir Richard Temple states the latter figure at 528,700, including certain tracts brought less directly under British administration. Broadly speaking, therefore, Queen Victoria's reign has witnessed the acquisition of nearly one-fourth of the present population and about one-half of the present area of British India. The first fact to be firmly grasped is that when her Majesty ascended the throne the Indian territories under English rule were little more than a half of the British India of to-day.

This vast expansion of territory has led to organic changes in the methods of Indian government. Its influence has been intensified and rendered uniform by the circumstance that, with the exception of Burmah, the expansion has been inland towards the north and west. In the early part of the Queen's reign, the Governor of Lower Bengal was in fact as in name the Governor-General of India. Great bodies of troops were massed in and around his capital, Calcutta. Besides the local garrison the headquarters of the army were in Fort William, and the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery at Dum Dum, seven miles off. The strong cantonment of Barrackpur lay sixteen miles up the river, and Chinsura, with its magnificent accommodation for European troops, about ten miles above. A line of military stations stretched thence along the valley of the Ganges to Dinapur, 636 miles northward by the river, supported by cantonments thrown out to a distance on both

sides. Lower Bengal is now shorn of its ancient military strength. The headquarters of the Bengal Artillery were removed to Meerut, 1,000 miles to the north-west, in 1854, after Lord Dalhousie's wars. The permanent headquarters of the army were transferred in 1865 to Simla, still further off, in the Punjab. Chinsura is now a solitude of palatial barracks without a soldier. Barrackpur has become a charming suburb of Calcutta, still with a few troops, but chiefly prominent of late years for the little differences of season ticket-holders with the railway company. The line of cantonments up the lower valley of the Ganges is abandoned for strategic positions in the far north-west. I have seen the spacious mess-house of a Bengal station offered at auction for 40% and sold eventually for the value of the old wood in its doors and windows. Native soldiers are dotted here and there, but the nearest military place of strength to Calcutta is now Dinapur, high above the limits of the Delta, and 343 miles by railway (or 636 by river) from the capital. The port of arrival and debarkation of the British troops is transferred from Calcutta to Bombay. The seat of the Government is necessarily fixed at the headquarters of the army, Simla, during the greater part of the year. The Viceroy of India is completely dissociated from the Governorship of Bengal.

While the war-array of British India has thus advanced inland the external relations of the Indian Government have moved still further to the north-west. During the first years of Queen Victoria's reign the Indian Foreign Office was still 'the secret and political department.' Its business was chiefly 'political' business, consisting of transactions with feudatory or native States. Four such States, or groups of States, severely taxed the resources and tried the patience of Indian diplomatists. The luxurious Muhammadan Court of Oude, a Sodom of profligacy and misrule, oppressed the northern valley of the Ganges. The religious and military confederation of the Sikhs ruled the Punjab beyond our furthest frontier on the north-west. A warlike aristocracy held Scinde in the extreme west. The powerful Maratha State of Nagpur occupied the heart of India. Oude is now a British province, the Punjab is now a British province, Scinde is a British province, Nagpur is a

British province. The management of these vast territories has passed from the Political Department to the Home Department of the Government of India. Other great native States remain, and under the assured policy of the Queen's rule will always remain; but the most critical problems of Indian diplomacy no longer arise out of our feudatory relations. The dangers which the armies of India are now prepared to face, and which the Indian Foreign Office now labours to avert, lie far to the west of Oude, and of Scinde, and of the Punjab. The same irresistible march of events which impelled our troops northwards from the mouth of the Ganges river to the mouth of the Khyber Pass and beyond the Bolan has transferred our chief diplomatic problems from the Courts of Hindostan to the great dividing line of Central Asia.

The expansion of the British power in India during her Majesty's reign and concurrent changes in the methods of administration, hereafter to be described, enable the Queen's Government in India to act with an overwhelming force, unknown in the days of the Company. I have mentioned that one exception exists to the north-western tendency of that expansion—the conquest of Burmah. The three wars which, in 1824–26, 1852, and 1885, led to the annexation of this province, tell their own story of the increased weight of resources which the Indian Government now brings to bear at every point of its empire. The first Burmese war in 1824 lasted over two costly and bloody years; and five more years were spent in guerilla fighting before order could be finally evolved. The second Burmese war in 1852 was of less, but still of serious difficulty. The actual military operations proved incomplete. Standing camps of banditti maintained their positions during two years, and eight years elapsed before a completely successful administration was established. The third Burmese war in 1885 was not so much a campaign as a military progress. The country has been flooded with troops and armed police, recruited from the distant northern races who, 40 years ago, were our most formidable enemies. There is every reason to hope that within two years and a half of the landing of the force in 1885, Upper Burmah will have peacefully settled down under civil rule. Yet the territories now annexed exceed the acquisitions of 1826 and

1852 put together ; and their geographical position presented difficulties which the East India Company might well have hesitated to face. On all the three occasions the provocation was equally persistent, and the necessity for war equally imperative. But the history of the past two years in Burmah forms a significant contrast to the wars of 1824 and 1852 for completeness of design, for swiftness of execution, and for that truest humanity which, by the employment of all available means, shortens the pangs of the new birth.

This aggregation of force, with the whole might of England in reserve, has armed with a giant's strength the Government of India. It is a most solemn duty of the British nation to see that that Government does not use it as a giant. I believe, and I shall give reasons for my belief, that the increasing control of Parliament is an absolutely necessary complement of the expansion of India under the Queen. But before passing to changes of system, it may be well to get a clear idea of the type of Indian statesman to whom the expansion has been chiefly due. There have been many conquering Governor-Generals in India under the Queen, from the histrionic Ellenborough, a few years after her accession, to Lord Dufferin in the year of her jubilee. But one man towers with majestic forehead and dauntless eyes above the rest. During the Marquis of Dalhousie's government the period of conquest and annexation found its climax ; in his character the highest qualities of an Indian subjugator were summed up. He came earnestly desiring peace. Throughout his long rule of eight years his mind was full of schemes of sober development. He founded the modern Department of Public Works. He opened the Ganges Canal. He gave the great impulse from the Indian side to the overland route, and to steam communication, *via* the Red Sea, with England. He cut the first sod of an Indian railway. Under his orders the first line of electric telegraph posts across India was set up. His engineers metalled a longer mileage of roads than had been constructed by the four preceding Governor-Generals. His Revenue officers settled the assessment of the soil, and recorded the land-rights of the people throughout a larger area. He introduced cheap postage into India. On the system of Public Instruction inaugurated during his rule the education of India still rests.

But Lord Dalhousie came to India at a time when peace was not possible. Three months after his arrival his predecessor's scheme for governing the Punjab by a Sikh protectorate broke down beneath its own weight of Ministerial corruption, military ambition, and female intrigue. The Queen Regent had taken her Prime Minister as her paramour. Two British officers were treacherously massacred, awaiting hand-in-hand their death, and foretelling with their last words the day when England would avenge their blood. The first operations of our hasty border levies failed. An Afghan force poured through the passes, seized the frontier capital, and streamed onwards to swell the Sikh army. Lord Dalhousie's Government had no alternative but to conquer or to be effaced in the Punjab. The battle of Chilianwallah saw British guns and British colours lost on the field, and made the spring of 1849 a time of mourning throughout England. By the victory of Gujarat the Punjab was annexed. On the distant south-eastern extremity of the Empire, the ill-treatment of British merchants and seamen by the King of Burmah, and the insults to our naval officer sent to remonstrate, forced on another war, ending in the annexation of Pegu. Within India, under many of the feudatory Princes, fifty years of British guarantee from external attack and internal revolt had delivered over the people to a callous misrule. It is impossible to read a matter-of-fact narrative of what men witnessed day by day in a native kingdom, like Colonel Sleeman's Journey through Oude, without a sense of guilt that such a state of things should have grown up under British treaties and should have been maintained by British troops. Lord Dalhousie kept faith with the feudatory Princes to the letter, but he availed himself of the precedents of the Mughal Empire to intervene on the failure of natural heirs. This is not the place either to attack or to defend the Doctrine of Lapse which brought several of the native States under direct British rule. In each case Lord Dalhousie acted within what he believed to be his rights, and in each case he believed himself bound to take action by his duty to the people. His private diary bears witness to the anxious desire to do justice with which that pained and noble heart accepted the task thus forced upon it. As one who has examined the Coulston manu-

scripts, I may be permitted to say that the codicil to Lord Dalhousie's will, which forbids the publication of his journals till fifty years after his death, has proved not only a misfortune to his own memory, but a serious loss to each succeeding Governor-General. The great pro-consul declined to add fuel to the strife which raged on Indian questions during the period between the close of his rule and his death. But the whole nature of the man stands revealed in one passage of his diary, in which he sums up the ground for his last and greatest act of annexation, the absorption of Oude. He believed that the British Government lay under a solemn obligation to free from oppression a people from whom it had taken away the possibility of freeing themselves. 'With this feeling on my mind, and in humble reliance on the blessing of the Almighty, for millions of His creatures will draw freedom and happiness from the change, I approach the execution of this duty, gravely and not without solicitude, but calmly and altogether without doubt.' By such a type of master-builder the expansion of India during Queen Victoria's reign was chiefly wrought.

## II

## CONSOLIDATION

AFTER Lord Dalhousie, the conqueror, and shortly before Lord Lawrence, the consolidator of India under the Queen, came Lord Canning, who, in regard to his work as in sequence of time, holds an intermediate place between the two. On Earl Canning fell the double burden of losing a large part of India and of retrieving the loss. The Mutiny of 1857 was the price paid for attempting to unite India under a central Government without the material appliances and the moral influences necessary to maintain unity. That attempt had been made, on a larger or smaller scale, by Afghan, Pathan, Mughal, and Maratha. Its uniform history had been a slow aggregation of territories separated by race and by nature, reaching a climax of strength under some exceptionally vigorous ruler, and ending in disintegration and revolt. Distance and space, mountains and deserts, vast intervening regions of forest, and mighty rivers, had placed barriers to any central Government in India, barriers which the native dynasties had been able for a time to overstep, but never in the long run to overcome. It is only during the second part of Queen Victoria's reign that the railway, the steamship, and the telegraph have rendered the resources of the Empire swiftly available at every point within it, and made a united India a permanent possibility. Lord Canning in 1857 had not only to contend against the old centrifugal forces in India, and against distances which might well have broken any Power with a heart less high and a resolve less stern than England; he had to fight the battle with an army drained of its ablest officers for the civil administration of the lately annexed provinces, and at first with generals who, in the most critical posts, as at Meerut and

Cawnpore, were incapacitated by age or by irresolution of character.

Nor were the moral influences which have since welded India into an Empire less conspicuously absent than the material appliances of centralisation. Lord Canning had to depend on the shifting self-interests of Princes who, until Lord Mayo's rule 12 years later, never knew the sentiment of personal loyalty to the Throne. He had to deal with peoples for whose enlightenment no serious effort had been made till three short years before his arrival; peoples left a prey to the panics of ignorance, liable to false and fatal alarms as to our intentions, and subject to those storm-waves of fanaticism which Western education in India has since dammed up in sluggish backwaters and reduced to a sceptical calm. Worst of all, he had to act through men in high places, some of whom were grossly ignorant or culpably negligent of the feelings of the native army, while others were paralysed by routine. The official historian of the Mutiny has had sorrowfully to record that the rumour of the greased cartridges was no fable; and although steps were taken to prevent the covers smeared with cow's fat from defiling the mouths of the Sepoys, the flame which the panic had kindled could only be burned out by the fiercer fires of war. Lord Canning put down the Mutiny, proclaimed the Queen's rule throughout India, and reached England only to die.

A Plan of Government, published with an air of authority in 1793, had suggested that 'a Viceroy' should be appointed for British India. But the East India Company, while willing on various occasions to draw closer to the Crown, held itself as far aloof as it dared from Parliament. It was an aphorism of Leadenhall-street, an aphorism associated with more than one great name, that if ever India was lost it would be lost in the House of Commons. There was truth in the saying from the Leadenhall-street point of view. The India of the retired nabob in the last century, when the lawful pay of the Company's servants formed but a small part of their gains, was lost in 1773 and 1784 in Parliament. The India of the first quarter of the present century, with its commercial monopoly and its too exclusive government by European officials, was lost in 1813 and 1833 in Parliament. The India of the middle of the century,



with its close borough of patronage, a close borough which sometimes indeed sent to India noble representatives, was in 1853 lost in Parliament. But in each case the loss to the Company and its servants proved a gain to India and the British nation. The Act for the better government of India in 1858 did not bring India for the first time under the control of the House of Commons. It provided that instead of that control being enforced by a great inquest held every 20 years on the renewal of the Company's charter, or on very special occasions between, it should be daily exercised by her Majesty's Ministers, responsible for their acts each evening in Parliament.

A corresponding change was introduced into the administrative mechanism for giving effect to Parliamentary supervision. To the outward world the Secretary of State appeared to step into the place of the President of the Board of Control, and the Secretary of State's Council seemed the natural successor of the Court of Directors. But beneath this show of continuity a fundamental difference lay hid. The Court of Directors supervised, on their own initiative, the whole ordinary administration of India. They drew up the despatches to the Governor-General, and their special knowledge of India rendered it difficult for the President of the Board of Control to exercise his undoubted right to criticise or alter what they had written. His interference was chiefly confined to his own allotted departments, the regulation of treaties, and the declaration of war or peace. Even in these departments his decisions were usually forced upon him by the previous action of the Governor-General in India, or were powerfully influenced by the Indian experts in the Court of Directors. It often only remained for the President of the Board of Control to sanction what the Company or its servants had done. The power of initiative in the control of all great Indian questions, alike of internal administration and of external policy, now rests, not with the Secretary of State's Council, but with the Secretary of State himself. The despatches to India issue under his single signature and in his name. 'I have considered in Council,' he says, the facts of the case, and then he proceeds to give his decision thereon. He may not only overrule his Council, but he and the permanent officials under him can to some extent

regulate what individual questions shall be submitted to his Councillors. The Council is still strong in Indian experience, but it has not the power of initiative possessed by the Court of Directors. Personal Indian experience, moreover, is now supplemented (it never can be superseded) by carefully compiled and published information regarding each district and province; and, so far, the Council has lacked that representative character which gave to the Court of Directors their abiding strength. Nor can the Viceroy by previous action force the hand of the Secretary of State, as the Governor-General could confront with the *fait accompli* the President of the Board of Control. The old despatches from the Company's servants in India solicit approval for what they have done; the present despatches from the Indian Government request sanction for what it proposes to do. The telegraph informs the Secretary of State, day by day, of every important intention of the Government of India, and enables him in each case to stay action if he sees fit.

While the control of India has thus been consolidated in the hands of the Secretary of State, the Government of India has been firmly gathered up into the hands of the Viceroy. Apart from cases of emergency or high importance, in which the Viceroy may by law act independently of his colleagues, modern practice has rendered the Governor-General in Council a more compact and automatic body than it was under the Company. The open opposition of the Council, which for a time crippled Warren Hastings, had long ceased to be possible. But down to the last year of the Company, the system of work tended to keep the Governor-General and his Council asunder. The discussion of every case was done in writing. The members of Council recorded elaborate minutes, which travelled in locked mahogany boxes from the house of one member to another, varied by Ulysses-like wanderings after the camp of the Governor-General, perhaps 500 miles off. He governed most who wrote most, and the personal influence of the Governor-General, except on questions of policy which he pleased to make his own, was apt to be lost in the mass of manuscript.

Lord Canning remodelled his Council into a Cabinet, with

himself as president. Each member of Council has now become a minister in charge of a separate department, and responsible directly to the Viceroy for its work. Matters of routine seldom go beyond the member in charge; questions of more importance are generally settled between the member and the Viceroy. Only when they differ, or when points of special interest or of public policy are involved, does the Viceroy circulate the papers to his colleagues. Lord Lawrence further developed this reform. A great deal more is now done by personal discussion. The secretary of each department has a day a week with the Viceroy, lays before him the facts of every important case, and receives his orders upon it. Another day a week is given to the oral discussion of the most important cases by the Viceroy and his Council. Under the Company, an indolent Governor-General might leave all but the most capital questions to be fought out by his members of Council in writing. A masterful Viceroy might treat the lucubrations of his Councillors as of merely academic interest, and amid the multiplicity of minutes take his own course. But, unless he had the tact and the iron will of Dalhousie, he quickly found his relations grow strained with his Council, and his position sooner or later made uncomfortable by their friends in the Court of Directors. A masterful Viceroy would now find it more difficult to pursue his own way without fair discussion, and an indolent Viceroy, unless bereft of the sense of humour, would feel his appearances in Council ridiculous. But the daily personal influence of a Viceroy who gives his mind to his work has immensely increased under the Cabinet system of transacting business.

The consolidating forces which have thus reorganised the Parliamentary control and the Viceregal government of India, make themselves equally felt in the administration. At the beginning of the Queen's reign the district officer was the one conspicuous figure in the internal management of the country. Far-off things called boards and councils and governors were known to exist, but their existence was scarcely realised by the people. The head of the district, or 'collector,' was a king in his own right, and his subjects troubled themselves with few speculations as to the ultimate sanctions on

which his authority might rest. One by one his prerogatives have been curtailed by the Provincial Governments. Fifty years ago those Governments had not the knowledge requisite to safely curb the collector's power of the initiative. Districts now within eight hours of Calcutta were described in the 'Calcutta Review' shortly before the Mutiny as 'quite unexplored.' Famines, pestilences, agrarian agitations, tribal movements, the upheavals of sects and castes—in short, all the less common but inevitable incidents of Indian rule—took the Government by surprise. No regular census, that initial step to a knowledge of the people, had ever been attempted in Bengal; and the first census in this lieutenant-governorship disclosed, in 1872, the existence of twenty-five millions of British subjects above the previous official estimates. The facts regarding each administrative division, town, and village of any size in British India, with an account of their physical aspects, their history, peoples, and products, are now ranged in 120 printed volumes, drawn up and indexed on a uniform plan, upon the shelves of the Indian secretariats. This enormous work is only an outward symbol of the efforts made by the Provincial Governments during the Queen's reign to inform themselves regarding the local conditions of government. The railway enables a governor to visit as many districts in a few months as formerly occupied his tour during as many years.

The district officers now complain that their duties are being narrowed to writing reports, and to carrying out the orders of Government thereon. The commissioners, or high local officials intermediate between the collectors and the Government, lament that they have become mere post-offices for the transmission of these documents. The Boards of Revenue, which formerly supervised the district administration from the provincial capitals, perceive themselves drifting into the position of secretaries to the Lieutenant-Governor, and expect the day when they will be formally constituted his councillors. Meanwhile the *personnel* of the Provincial Governments has been strengthened in proportion to their increased duties. Where one chief secretary sufficed, three separate secretariats, each with a complete staff, now fence round a Lieutenant-Governor. A new race of beings, called

heads of departments, director-generals, and inspector-generals, who existed only in a rudimentary form under the Company, firmly enforce the control which the secretariats initiate. A financial councillor of the Viceroy lately bewailed his lot, fallen in evil days, when 'the Finance Minister of India had become a mere secretary to the Secretary of State. I comfort myself, however,' he added, 'by the reflection that my successor will be only his clerk.' Yet the Finance Minister is, and must always be, the most powerful member of the Government, next to the Viceroy.

The same complaint of excessive centralisation comes from every class of Indian administrators. Whether centralisation has really been carried too far cannot yet be with certainty pronounced. The district officer still stands as the visible representative of British rule to the people. The administrative machine seems to work with a smoothness and rapidity formerly unknown. Mistakes are more easily corrected; misconduct is more promptly checked; from a cheaper judicial agency equal results are obtained. Whether good work will be equally encouraged, honest workers as firmly supported, and the individuality of the administrators as usefully developed, time alone can show. Any forecast is complicated by the circumstance that, while the initiative of the collectors has been curtailed, a new administrative mechanism of rural unions, district boards, and municipal bodies has been created. It may seem to the next generation that the decay of the district officer was merely a natural stage in the growth of local self-government. To despondent critics of an older school it appears the first step towards disintegration. One thing is certain. The increased strength, the prompter action, and the fuller knowledge which the heads of provinces now bring to bear on the district administration, permit of local self-government being tried under safer conditions, because under a more vigilant control.

The consolidation of India under the Queen is not, however, a mere question of the mechanism of government. The old Customs' lines, which strangled internal trade and divided province from province, have been swept off the map of India during the second half of her Majesty's reign. Unless one remembered the years of effort required to effect this reform,

it would now be difficult to realise the state of things which preceded it. Actual hedges of thorns and cactus bushes and prickly pear walled out the products of one territory from another. Regiments of Customs' officers walked up and down the sides of these hedges along imaginary geographical lines. Those lines were once, indeed, the bitterly contested frontiers of hostile States. Before the beginning of the reign they had lost their meaning. Differential duties on a prime necessary of life—salt—continued, however, during more than 40 years to be levied in the several Presidencies. The railways which rendered a united India possible also rendered necessary the equalisation of duties and the abolition of the internal Customs' lines. Each succeeding Viceroy since the Mutiny has laboured at the task of making unity a reality in India. But as Lord Dalhousie stands conspicuous as the conqueror, so will Lord Lawrence and Lord Northbrook be memorable as the consolidators of India under the Queen, and the brothers Strachey as the breakers down of the old artificial barriers between its provinces. Lord Mayo did not live long enough to fully earn the name of consolidator, although his three short years won for him, as I shall show in my next article, perhaps a higher title.

While India has thus been compacted and knit together by the ties of government, by the fibres of trade, and by bands of iron and steel from railway centres in every province, its population has been incorporated under a system of common codes. Each race retains its domestic law, and the special conditions of each Presidency are provided for by local legislation. But the protection of person and property, with the punishment of offences against either, the transactions of commerce, the business of daily life between man and man, are placed under the sanctions of a common law. To any one who has in his memory the Imperial rescript which prefaced the Institutes of Justinian, the central authority '*non solum armis decoratam sed etiam legibus armatam,*' and who looks back on the results of Roman legislation on the modern world, the Indian codes may well appear the most enduring monuments of consolidation under the Queen. Those codes have been described by two masters of exact and vigorous English, Sir Henry Maine and Sir James Stephen, themselves veterans in Indian codification. Any

attempt to enter upon the subject is forbidden by the limits of this Review. But as an impartial observer whose Indian experience has included the twenty-five years during which the codes were introduced, I may be permitted to say that it is almost impossible to overrate the benefits which they have conferred. They have cheapened and simplified justice to the people ; they have improved the quality of the justice done ; they have raised the standard among those engaged in its administration, whether on the Bench or at the Bar. From a legal point of view it has been said that the difference between India before the codes and since the codes is the difference between India without a law and with a law. From the political point of view it may with greater accuracy be added that the difference is the difference of the Indian peoples without a bond of union and with one. Separated, like the nations of the Roman Empire, by religion, by race, and by language, they are at length brought together under a common law.

This work has been done by a series of Englishmen, each in his turn singularly fitted for the part of the task which fell to his share. The philosophical acumen of Sir Henry Maine was succeeded by the strong-fisted common sense of Sir James Stephen, to be followed by Lord Hobhouse's cautious industry, the long experience and technical skill of Mr. Whitley Stokes, and Mr. Ilbert's<sup>1</sup> fine hand. One weak point in Indian codification has been the lack of that acquaintance with actual difficulties in working, which, it would appear, can only be gained by a leading practice in the Indian courts. This has at length been remedied by the appointment for the first time, as law member, of an acknowledged head of the Indian Bar. Oxford is adding one more to the many services which she has rendered to India by publishing an admirable edition of the Indian codes. The Clarendon Press could not have commemorated the Queen's jubilee by any nobler monument of work done by Englishmen during her Majesty's reign.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I.

## III

## CONCILIATION

THE Royal Proclamation which in 1858 declared the transfer of India from the Company to the Queen gave three pledges to that country. To the Princes of India the Crown frankly relinquished the right, which the Company had lately enforced, of resuming the great fiefs of the Empire on the failure of natural heirs. To the people of India the Crown gave an assurance of their employment in the government of the country without distinction of religion or race. To both Princes and people the Queen proclaimed her deep personal concern in their welfare. I propose to narrate the chief measures by which these three pledges have been fulfilled—the measures by which the sense of self-interest, that fidelity to the salt, which formed the allegiance of India to the Company, is being transmuted into a sentiment of loyalty to the Throne. The first two involved new departures in policy which could only receive effect through her Majesty's representatives. The third was an expression of the mind of the Sovereign direct to the people, coming from the Royal heart, and depending for its performance on the Royal will. It may be convenient, therefore, first briefly to call to mind how the Queen's personal intentions to India have been carried out.

It is not too much to say that on every occasion which, since 1858, has stirred India the Queen has made her individual influence felt to a degree not conceived of by any previous Sovereign of England. In times of India's rejoicing the telegraph has never failed to flash the message that the Queen also rejoiced with her people; in seasons of suffering, that she suffered with them. In the domestic joys and sorrows of her own life the sympathies expressed by India have been acknowledged with a simplicity and pathos that go straight to the heart of Asiatic



racés. In the great calamities which at intervals have befallen the country, whether in the outburst of grief and wrath with which the Princes and people lamented Lord Mayo's death, or when they have had to mourn the loss of their own great chiefs, or during the long agony of famine, or amid the swift destruction of pestilence and flood, there have never been wanting Royal words of tenderness, consolation, and peace. Nor has the Royal purse been found closed in the hour of India's need. The Queen has not lacked sympathy towards her Indian servants and troops in their successes or their trials. But she has recognised, with a fine dynastic tact, that the joys and sorrows of her Indian subjects lie outside the scope of military achievement or the Government 'Gazette.' There is not a province in which her name is not associated with some movement for the good of the people. It is known throughout the length and breadth of the land that the widespread efforts now being made to bring medical relief to the women of India had their origin in words spoken in private by the Queen.

Until the present reign no Prince of the blood royal had ever set foot in India. Each of the Queen's three sons now living has visited India, and one of them, the Duke of Connaught, is there pursuing a soldier's career. The Duke of Edinburgh came in 1869, bearing messages of motherly love from the Sovereign to her people. His visit awakened chords which had lain mute since the overthrow of the Mughal dynasty. It was the seal of peace after the great struggle which placed India under the Crown, an Act of Oblivion for the painful memories which that struggle had left behind. The Prince of Wales's journey through India in 1875-6 called forth a burst of passionate loyalty such as had never attended the progress of any Delhi Emperor. The great feudatories felt for the first time that they were no longer passive units in an irresistible organization of political skill and military force, but living members of an Empire under a living head. As the Queen's Proclamation in 1858 had addressed the understanding, so the Heir Apparent's visit in 1876 appealed to the eyes of the people. It presented in a magnificent series of pageants the national significance of the change from India under the Company to India under the Crown. It heralded that still closer union of

India with the British Monarchy which was consummated on the Delhi ridge on January 1, 1877. The Duke of Connaught's work in India has been of a non-spectacular and strictly practical character. He afforded, however, the unusual sight of an English General, soon after his arrival in the country, addressing the native troops in their own tongue. He has come at a time when two great military problems are pressing for solution—the provision of younger and technically trained native officers for our native regiments, and the possibility of utilising the armies of the feudatory States. His Royal Highness has applied himself to that part of the question which directly concerns himself as a Presidency Commander-in-Chief, and is understood to be advocating a military college for native officers, which will do for them what Sandhurst has done for the British subaltern. India has been a country of new growths under the Queen; of a new era of industry, with new manufactures and new commerce; of new military aims on the part of the Princes, and of new political aspirations on the part of the people. But when one looks back on the race-hatreds of 1857, the most unexpected as well as the most beautiful of the new growths in India is the sentiment of personal loyalty to the Throne. That sentiment is in no small measure due to the spirit in which the Sovereign and her sons have during thirty years fulfilled the words of personal affection which the Queen in 1858 spoke to the Indian people.

The main pledges of the Royal Proclamation involved political or constitutional changes which had to be worked out, not by the Sovereign herself, but by her representatives. The most conspicuous of these promises was addressed to the Princes of India. The native chiefs include rulers of every degree, from the great potentate with ten millions of subjects and an army of 40,000 men, who raises his own revenues, stamps his own coinage, and exercises absolute powers of life and death, down to the owner of a few acres exempt from British taxation, or the hill rajah entitled to a chair in durbar. In the aggregate they govern nearly 600,000 square miles and a population exceeding 56 millions, and they maintain a force returned at 350,000 men, with 4,000 guns. The origin of their authority was as various as are the degrees in which they are permitted

to exercise it. Some trace their descent from the gods of the Hindu Pantheon or the heroes of the prehistoric epics, many to a time before the Mughal dynasty. A large number were merely the civil or military officers of that dynasty, whose salaries had taken the form of grants of land, originally resumable at the Imperial pleasure or on the death of the incumbent. Others were soldiers of fortune who had risen out of the ruins of the Mughal Empire, and whose success had been legitimated by treaties with the East India Company. But one deep and universal sentiment pervaded the whole—the desire to transmit to their successors their dignity and their States. The right of many of them to do so had always been doubtful; during the last years of the East India Company it was subjected to well-defined limits. It was allowed in the case of natural heirs, but denied in the case of an adopted son. The question was surrounded by many difficulties, historical and juristic. But, broadly speaking, the Company held that while an adopted son continued the legal and religious *persona* of the adoptive father, he did not, as a matter of right, continue his political *status*; and that the succession to a feudatory throne must, in such cases of adoption, be regulated by the dictates of public expediency. Lord Dalhousie enforced this doctrine, and several native States came under direct British rule. A feeling of uncertainty in the very matter in which certainty was most valued spread among the feudatory chiefs. It stands in history as the chief political incentive which co-operated with religious fanaticism and military insubordination to produce the disaster of 1857.

The Royal Proclamation of 1858 skilfully re-appealed to this common sentiment. It cut away all technical difficulties, whether of original title or of Hindu law, or of treaties, or of custom, or desuetude. It gave once and for all to the Princes of India an indefeasible hereditary title to their States. New grants were issued to chiefs of rank, the smaller ones reposed under the general terms of the Proclamation. That Proclamation did in 1858 for the feudatory Princes throughout all India what the Permanent Settlement had done in 1793 for the landholders of Bengal. It took a vast heterogeneous collection of powerful men, whose rights varied widely both in extent and in origin, and it united them into a body of firm supporters of the

British rule by placing them on a common basis of permanent title derived from the British Government. The feudatory Princes and the Bengal landholders alike realise that their present *status* is the creation of the English Government, and depends upon the stability of that Government. On the slightest symptom of British rule being threatened from without they have been eager in their offers of military and pecuniary aid. The Permanent Settlement of 1793 conferred the inestimable boon of indefeasible title on the Bengal landholders in return for payment of a fixed revenue. The sole conditions of the grant to the feudatory Princes in 1858 were fidelity to their engagements and loyalty to the Crown.

The Indian Foreign Office now works on the definite principle that it has got to make the best of a body of potentates who have become as permanent a part of the framework of Indian Government as the Peers have been of the British Constitution. One result of this principle is that, in cases of misconduct by a feudatory chief, the Foreign Office proceeds against him as an individual, but takes the utmost care to preserve his dynasty. On the occasions, now happily rare and becoming still more infrequent, of a Prince grossly misgoverning his people, or resorting to poison, or conniving at murder, he is removed from a position for which he has proved himself unsuited. But effectual steps are at the same time taken to continue the feudatory independence of his State. Sometimes a native council of regency is appointed, sometimes joint Prime Ministers, English and native, or his heir, however distant, or some collateral member of the family, is at once placed on the State cushion. This principle unexpectedly elevated, not many years ago, a herd-boy to the throne of the premier Hindu State of India.

It would, however, be a poor policy which contemplated only cases of misconduct. The whole relations of the Indian Foreign Office are now more cordial and more forbearing towards the feudatory chiefs. It interferes with them less, it respects their native methods of doing business more, it is the channel of honours from the Sovereign to those who govern well. It has become almost a fixed rule of practice that the Viceroy should be his own Foreign Minister, retaining in his own hand the

Foreign Office portfolio, with no Member of Council between himself and the feudatory chiefs. He is in direct and friendly contact with them, and takes every opportunity to gather them around him at solemn State functions as the visible representative of the Queen. Above all, he labours by precept and example for the education of their sons. The greater native States, or groups of States, have now their Indian Etons, personally inaugurated by the Viceroy or under his direct auspices, where the future Princes of India receive a manly and liberal training, as nearly on the lines of an English public school as the pomp and exclusiveness of the Indian feudatories permit.

Towards these results each succeeding Governor-General under the Queen has toiled. But one Viceroy stands conspicuous as the conciliator of the Princes of India—the lamented Earl of Mayo. I cannot conclude this part of my subject more fitly than by the words which that great-hearted ruler addressed to the chiefs of Rajputana, in the speech in which he laid down the plan for a college for their sons :—

‘I, as the representative of the Queen, have come here to tell you, as you have often been told before, that the desire of her Majesty’s Government is to secure to you and to your successors the full enjoyment of your ancient rights and the exercise of all lawful customs, and to assist you in upholding the dignity and maintaining the authority which you and your fathers have for centuries exercised in this land.

‘But in order to enable us fully to carry into effect this our fixed resolve, we must receive from you hearty and cordial assistance. If we respect your rights and privileges, you must also respect the rights and regard the privileges of those who are placed beneath your care. If we support you in your power, we expect in return good government. We demand that everywhere, throughout the length and breadth of Rajputana, justice and order shall prevail; that every man’s property shall be secure; that the traveller shall come and go in safety; that the cultivator shall enjoy the fruits of his labour and the trader the produce of his commerce; that you shall make roads, and undertake the construction of those works of irrigation which will improve the condition of the

people and swell the revenues of your States; that you shall encourage education and provide for the relief of the sick.

‘Be assured that we ask you to do all this for no other but your own benefit. If we wished you to remain weak, we should say, “Be poor, and ignorant, and disorderly.” It is because we wish you to be strong that we desire to see you rich, instructed, and well-governed. It is for such objects that the servants of the Queen rule in India, and Providence will ever sustain the rulers who govern for the people’s good.

‘I am here only for a time. The able and earnest officers who surround me will, at no distant period, return to their English homes. But the power which we represent will endure for ages. Hourly is this great Empire brought nearer and nearer to the throne of our Queen. The steam-vessel and the railroad enable England, year by year, to enfold India in a closer embrace. But the coils she seeks to entwine around her are no iron fetters, but the golden chains of affection and of peace. The days of conquest are past; the age of improvement has begun.

‘Chiefs and Princes, advance in the right way, and secure to your children’s children, and to future generations of your subjects, the favouring protection of a Power which only seeks your good.’

Such are the principles which now guide the Government of India in its daily dealings with the feudatory chiefs. They explain the passionate sorrow and resentment with which the Princes of India mourned for Lord Mayo’s death. They also explain the new aspirations of the feudatory chiefs to incorporate themselves more actively in the defence of the Empire— aspirations which lately found expression in the Nizam’s magnificent offer. I may be permitted to add that they account, too, for the satisfaction given in India by a peerage created a few months since. Lord Dalhousie and Lord Mayo, the conqueror and the conciliator of India under the Queen, both passed from this world under circumstances which rendered it difficult for the Crown to confer a permanent acknowledgment of their services. But both their families are at present represented in India in one household—that of the Governor of Madras, Lord Connemara.

The third pledge of the Royal Proclamation in 1858 was to

the people. It promised that, so far as might be, public employments in India should be open to all her Majesty's subjects without distinction of race or creed. In some respects this pledge may be regarded as a development of the policy prescribed by Parliament in 1833, and embodied in measures of the Indian Government and Legislature during a series of years extending from 1821 to 1843. But it has been carried out in the India of the Queen in a spirit unknown in the India of the Company. In the first place, the position and prospects of the branches of the public service formerly open to natives have been deliberately improved. Their pay, their pensions, their independence in action, the degree of initiative allowed to them, and the place assigned to them alike in the official hierarchy and in social esteem have been greatly enhanced. A widely spread taint of bribery had been bequeathed to the early native services by the Muhammadan system of direct payments for all judicial and, indeed, all official acts. This evil had to be provided against in the Penal Code, compiled under the Company and passed soon after its downfall, by clauses against corruption in public servants of a searching severity unknown to any other body of civilised law. That taint has been purged away, except among the police underlings and the lowest classes of native officials. To take one example—when India came to the Crown, the native judicial service was under-paid, weak in numbers, deficient in qualifications, and generally believed to be corrupt. The rural administration of justice has now practically passed to native officers, well paid, highly qualified, and absolutely free from suspicion of bribery. A Hindu gentleman is at this moment acting as Chief Justice of Bengal, the highest judicial post in India. Native Judges sit upon the benches of her Majesty's High Court in each of the Presidency towns, and conduct in the lower grades the immense preponderance of judicial work throughout the districts.

While the position of the branches of the service formerly available to natives has been improved, new branches have been thrown open to them. Native gentlemen exercise a powerful voice in making and modifying the laws of India, as members of the Viceroy's and the Provincial and Legislative Councils.

They are graded with European officers in all the great departments, Revenue, Education, and Public Works. The Covenanted Civil Service, that sacred college of sons and nephews in the days of the Company, is now open to the youth of India by the same methods as it is open to the youth of England. The new limit of age bears hard upon the Indian candidates, and this, with other details, has probably not yet reached its final adjustment. In the meanwhile another channel of entrance has been provided by direct appointments in India, and one-sixth of the Covenanted Civil Service must by law be eventually composed of natives of that country. The great body of administrative offices not reserved under statute for the Covenanted Civil Service, which is now a service of control rather than of administrative *minutiae*, are already filled by natives of India.

Her Majesty's Indian subjects now claim a fair share, not merely in the administration, but also in the government of their country. These aspirations form part of that momentous question Whither? which all men who have taken a serious part in the conduct of Indian affairs under the Queen are at this moment asking themselves. In my concluding letter I shall endeavour, with such lights as I possess, to deal with that question. But meanwhile it has been found in India that an intermediate stage exists between the fair admission of the natives to the administration, and their incorporation into the political management of the country. That intermediate stage is local self-government. What Lord Ripon practically replied to the people was :—' We neither allow nor deny your claims at present to a share in the government of the country. But we ask you to prove your fitness by showing us how you can rule your own villages.' This was the constraining political necessity underlying Lord Ripon's measures for the development of local self-government in India. Initial mistakes were made. They will be forgotten. The Parliamentary method of first trying to find out what everybody would like obscured for a time the autocratic method which every Viceroy of India has had sooner or later to adopt—namely, to realise the force of the accomplished fact among heterogeneous races and to keep his programme to himself. The question of local self-govern-



ment was complicated by the soreness of an important section of the community caused by the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill. But when we look back to the solid work left behind by the late Viceroy, not as foreshadowed in too eloquent sermons of his Secretariat, but as embodied in lasting laws, it is difficult not to feel that the advance was made on the true lines, and that a great question was dealt with in a great and Imperial spirit. Much of the actual legislation was necessarily done by the Provincial Legislatures, but Lord Ripon was rightly recognised alike by his supporters and his opponents, as the mainspring of the whole.

It is vain to expect that local self-government will permanently satisfy the aspirations which the Queen's Proclamation and English education have awakened in India. But meanwhile it has accomplished two things. It has supplied a fair answer at an intermediate stage in the growth of political rights, an answer which not only proved the good will of the Government, but which will also test the fitness of the governed. The policy of which it formed a chief part produced a popular conviction in India, to an extent never existing before, that the English Viceroy was earnestly interested in, and deeply sympathised with, the people. Lord Ripon had the gift of making great populations regard him as their personal friend. The Viceroyalty of India is a many-sided office. It allows free scope to the most widely different types of character. But no English statesman who fills it in a noble spirit can fail to leave his lasting mark for good upon the country. To each Viceroy his own special task. Indian history, which knows men neither as Whigs nor as Tories, but simply by the work which they do for India, while it assigns to Lord Mayo the position of the conciliator of the Princes, will also recognise in Lord Ripon a conciliator of the people.

## IV

## THE NEW LEAVEN

THE Mutiny of 1857 found the people of India perilously ignorant of the character and the aims of the Government. It also found them a prey to those panics of fanaticism which sweep across uninstructed and superstitious races. But shortly before that disaster a policy had been inaugurated which was destined to modify profoundly this state of things. Sir Charles Wood's<sup>1</sup> great despatch of 1854 had laid upon the Indian Government the duty of educating the Indian people. Until then this duty, so far as it had been fulfilled at all, had been discharged by pundits and maulavis of the ancient credulous learning and by Christian missionaries. The Company had, indeed, endowed or assisted many noble institutions; and educational committees, guided by philanthropic Englishmen, whose memories are still held in honour in India, laid the groundwork of a system of general instruction. But these efforts were on a scale altogether inadequate to the work to be done. At first, indeed, the Company only aimed at winning the popular esteem which in the East attaches to a royal patron of learned religious men. Its next aspirations were confined to training up a sufficient number of young Indians to assist it, on low pay, in the details of the administration.

The real instruction of the people was carried on by different methods and in other hands. The ancient Sanscrit tols, or colonies of colleges, still shed their old-world lights in rural India, giving their shorter preliminary course of philosophy in seven years, and a more adequate curriculum in fourteen or twenty-one; but chiefly priding themselves on their gray-headed students, who devoted their whole earthly existence to the life

<sup>1</sup> Viscount Halifax.

of a learner. In every village the little boys squatted under some spreading tree or in a mat hut, writing and ciphering on the strewn sand, and listening to stories of gods and heroes from a poor but holy preceptor, whom they propitiated with pumpkins and a monthly dole of rice. While the Hindu pundits thus pursued their ancient routine, the education of the Muhammadans remained undisturbed in the hands of their own religious instructors. In the mosques and in the verandah or courtyard of every Musalman noble some servant of Islam varied his calm round of daily prayer by teaching the youth the principles of the faith. The recitation of the Koran ascended hourly from thousands of such boy groups, swaying their supple little brown bodies backwards and forwards in rhythmic time as they chanted the Arabic texts, of which they were never taught the meaning. The higher Muhammadan education was conducted by theologians who basked in the Imperial presence, and whose decisions on knotty points of doctrine issued with more than Imperial authority. To zealous Christian propagandists such instruction, Hindu and Muhammadan alike, was the mere teaching of the devil. The missionaries threw themselves with passionate energy into the work of imparting more excellent things. There is no branch of the Latin Church, whether Catholic or Protestant, which has not left some name dear to India as that of a public instructor. All honour to those early voices crying in the wilderness—alike to the Jesuits, De Nobili and Beschi; to the martyr, De Britto; to the Carmelite, Fra Paolino; to the Lutherans, Ziegenbalg, Schultze, and Schwartz; to the Baptists, Carey, Marshman, and Judson; to the Presbyterians, Duff, of Calcutta, and Wilson of Bombay; to Henry Martyn, that beautiful young spirit of the Anglican Church; and to the whole noble army of Christian workers, by whatsoever sect they were sent, and from whatsoever country they came, who, before the national conscience of England had awakened and while the official conscience in India still remained inert, entered on the great task of educating the Indian people.

Since 1854 State education has formed an important instrument of British rule in India. The previous committees were organized into a complete system of public instruction, directed by high officers, and spreading a network of schools over every

district. The old agencies, indigenous and missionary, were for a time and in certain localities, looked upon by the new department with a cold eye. But they were unmolested, then aided, and are now, by the recent Education Commission, cordially incorporated into a truly national system of State education. The same year, 1857, that witnessed the convulsion of the Mutiny saw also the Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay founded by Acts of the Indian Legislature. Two additional Universities have since been established for the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab. It is almost impossible to convey to any one who has not spent the greater part of the last thirty years in India a conception of the profound changes which State education has brought about. It is easy indeed to reckon up the schools of which the State has cognisance at 143,000, and the pupils at over 3,400,000. But all the facts of Indian progress express themselves in millions, and the true results of a great spiritual influence on a people cannot be gauged by statistics, or by the number of its visible habitations, or by any outward magnificence in stone and lime. The marvellous uprising of the Indian intellect has been compared with the revival of learning in Europe. But there is this essential difference. The schools and colleges of Europe were still mainly directed by the Church; the schools and colleges of India are directed by the State. The British Government of India, like Matthew Arnold's ideal ruler, is of the religion of all its subjects, and of the bigotry of none. Thirty-three years ago that Government found Indian education resting on an almost exclusively religious basis. It has reorganized Indian education on an almost exclusively secular basis. The result is not chiefly one of figures. It is to be found rather in the upheaval of new ideas, the quickening of new social and political forces, and in the deadening of the old fanaticism, the dismemberment of the old superstitions, the death of old beliefs.

This is the New Leaven at work in the India of the Queen. Many Indian thinkers, Hindu, Muhammadan, and missionary, only fear that it has done its work too thoroughly. They look forward with apprehension to the effects of a national education which is destructive of the national faiths. There is something very touching in the anxious consideration which the Indian

Education Commission of 1882 gave to this subject, compared with the meagreness of the results. That body consisted of twenty-one men chosen for their administrative ability or educational experience from the various provinces of India; high English officials, Hindus, Muhammadans, missionaries, the representatives alike of the Government and of the great sections of the Indian community. The members conferred with each other again and again in private on the effects of education on the religious character of the Indian races; their discussions at the meetings of the Commission in the Calcutta Town Hall were long and animated. 'On the one hand,' says their report, 'it was argued that moral and religious instruction was the necessary complement to secular instruction; that to the people of India, so instinctively religious, such instruction would be thoroughly congenial; that the necessity of it had been forcibly pressed upon the Commission by a number of witnesses, and its absence been the subject of many complaints.' But after careful deliberation the Commission found itself forced back upon a *non possumus*. It rejected a proposal 'that religious instruction be permitted in primary schools maintained by boards,' even if the sanction of the local committee were obtained and absolute exemptions provided for children whose parents objected. The decision against attempting to teach religion in Government schools and colleges was equally firm, and extended to the prohibition of any examiner setting a question which might call for an expression of a candidate's belief. All that the Commission could propose for primary schools was that 'inspecting officers and teachers be directed to see that the teaching and discipline of every school are such as to exert a right influence on the manners, the conduct, and the character of the children, and that for the guidance of the masters a special manual be prepared.' The utmost it could recommend for colleges was that 'an attempt be made to prepare a moral text-book, based upon the fundamental principles of natural religion,' and that a course of lectures be delivered each session 'on the duties of a man and a citizen.' This solemn endeavour of a great and powerful Commission to provide religious teaching for two hundred millions of souls ending in 'a moral text-book,' carried by a

narrow majority, and 'a series of lectures on the duties of a man and a citizen,' which the report feared would be 'delivered in a perfunctory manner,' is one of the pathetic spectacles of modern history.

While, however, the Indian Government declines to teach religion in the State schools, it also declines to interfere with the teaching of religion in private institutions. To all alike, to the Hindu school, to the Mosque school, to the missionary school, to the schools of the Jews, of the Greeks, the Armenians, the Parsees, and the new theistic sects, it offers pecuniary aid under printed rules according to their standards of secular instruction. It is partly owing to this safety valve that the Indian system of public instruction, while profoundly modifying Indian religious thought, has produced no violent disruption of the ancient faiths. There has been no spiritual cataclysm. The result, however, is chiefly due to the well-earned hold which the national religions of India have upon the people. The doctors of Islam are confident that their pure monotheism has less than Christianity to fear from modern science. Hinduism is embarrassed by no definite canon of scripture. No œcumenical council, no received and finite tradition, ever sealed up its fountains of inspired truth. Hinduism forms a unique product of plastic conservatism, which has moulded itself during ages upon the slowly changing needs, social and religious, of the Indian races. For Hinduism is a social organization as well as a religious confederacy. As a social organization it rests upon caste, but with its roots deep down in the ethnical elements and family life of the people. As a religious confederacy it represents the coalition of the higher Brahmanical faith with popular rites.

For the masses, Hinduism has constructed a round of observances amounting to a perpetual recognition of the Unseen Powers. Its religious year still rests upon the basis of nature, to whose times and seasons the births and apotheoses of deities have, on pain of oblivion, to conform. Its frankly solar cycle of festivals is not obscured by the meteorological vagaries of the northern temperate zone. As the sun declines sadly in winter to its lowest point, the people purify themselves from the sins of the past with lustrations for their ancestors, and

bathings in the river or the ocean for their own backslidings. The tardy solar re-ascent is celebrated by mingled ceremonies of retrospect and of hope, culminating in the joyous outburst of the spring festival and the solemnities of high summer. In the tropics the festivals of a people are the religious life of a people, little affected by educational text-books or by the Government inspector of schools. For the more intellectual classes Hinduism provides less material devotions; and for the most intellectual it has its esoteric truths. Hereditary religions are usually placid. The educated Hindus find a benevolent scepticism as to the dogmas of their national faith quite compatible with a calm enjoyment of its ritual. One of the most eminent of them, a man full of years and riches and honours, who has established hospitals, founded schools, made roads and drained marshes throughout his estates, came last spring to bid me 'good-bye' when I was leaving India for a few months. Like most elderly Brahmans, he had been engaged for years in preparation for the future life, living on the simplest diet at the cost of a few pence a day. As he was going away, I said, 'I trust I shall find you well on my return in November.' He answered, 'I hope so,' adding gently, 'unless before then you hear that I am better.' It is not surprising that a religion which can produce this inward serenity, and which can freely adapt its externals to the changing wants of the age, should fear little from the State college or the Anglo-vernacular school.

Recent careful observers would state the case more strongly. They think that Hinduism has yet much work to do. They point out that its old task of absorbing the races of India into a religious and social federation is still unfinished. The low castes are yearly creeping upwards to higher standards of ceremonial observance, the out-castes are coming within the pale, the hill and forest peoples are entertaining Brahman priests and copying Hindu rites. Whether the rise of the low castes in the ceremonial scale is a gain to them in this life seems doubtful, but it is not a question which they will ask us to decide. To the aboriginal races, with their witch-finders and murrain-spreaders, and perpetual fear of sorcerers and devils, the advantage is more evident. A Brahman has only to set up his

leaf hut in their glens and to mark a stone or trunk of a tree with a daub of red paint, and the poor malignant spirits of the forest flee before the powerful Hindu gods. The legend of the Archangel smiting down the demon with his sword is every year enacted in some forest recess of India. An authoritative system of worship is a great comfort to these backward races, hemmed in by the uncontrolled forces of tropical nature, as it teaches them how to propitiate the mysterious powers and tends to liberate their minds from the terrors of the unseen. I have no sympathy with those who would minimise the results of Christian missionary enterprise in India. But the Indian census, in spite of obscurities of classification, proves that Hinduism is a religion which has not yet exhausted its mandate. For the hundreds which it loses to Christianity, or to Islam, or to the new theistic sects, thousands of the lower races crowd into its fold. To those races Hinduism means a change from the fear of demons to the worship of gods.

The railways, which have rendered the political unity of India under the Queen possible, tend also to the consolidation of the national faiths. The path of pilgrimage has been made smooth. For the Muhammadans the Passenger Ships Acts and the ocean steamers have deprived the journey to the Prophet's birthplace and tomb of its dangers. Messrs. Cook & Son, under a convention with the Bombay Government, conduct Musalmans to Mecca with the same care and economy as they conduct Christians to Jerusalem. For the leading Hindu shrines convenient branch railways have been constructed, which give fair promise of 6 per cent. dividends and shares at 25 above par. The more secluded temples still have their old-fashioned worshippers. But the chances of a god doing a large and increasing business are greatly improved by a railway station. Juggernaut himself, after defying the calumnies of a century, now finds his popularity imperilled for want of railway communication. The prospects of 'The Lord of the World' rise and fall as the Secretary of State is rumoured in India to be willing to grant terms to the proposers of the branch Orissa line at 3 or 3½ per cent. But pilgrimage by return ticket, with children at half-fares, while it promotes joyous gatherings of the people in honour of the gods, is death to fanaticism.



Education in India has its political embarrassments ; but it has strengthened the hands of the British Government. We are no longer, as in 1857, dealing with dense masses ignorant of our aims and a prey to false but fatal misrepresentations. If the little cakes or chapatis of the Mutiny were now forwarded from village to village they would have about the same effect that the sending out of the Fiery Cross would in the Scottish Highlands, or the despatch of the tribal sal-leaf through the Santal glens. The Indian peoples have their grievances, as the Argyllshire cottars have theirs. But they now seek redress for their grievances by methods which we can watch and understand. Muhammadans and Hindus still hate each other enough to like a street fight when their festival processions get jammed at a narrow corner, and neither party will give way. But organized fanaticism is a thing of the past. Instead of the perils of ignorance, we are now face to face with the dangers of education. Amid our new difficulties, we should not forget the old ones which they have superseded.

The benefits of the change may be realised from many examples. I shall select two drawn from the two great sections of the Indian population. Muhammadan agitations in India have usually been stimulated by fatwas, or decisions of the doctors of Islam, in favour of holy war. Such a fatwa was promulgated with solemn pomp in 1857, and the long course of Wahabi disaffection was during forty years supported by similar decisions. A standing camp was maintained against us just over our north-western frontier, recruited from zealous Muhammadans in the Company's territories, and supplied with the sinews of war by subscriptions in the rich cities of the Ganges. One expedition after another was sent against the camp beyond our border, and one State trial after another strained the credit of the Government in British India. The disaffected leaders conscientiously rested their cause on the religious duty of the Indian Musalmans to bring back a Muhammadan country under the rule of Islam. So serious was this aspect of the case that Lord Mayo, in 1871, permitted the evidence in the records of the Government to be embodied in a work entitled 'The Indian Musalmans—Are

they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?'<sup>1</sup> It showed that, according to the best authorities, they were not. But the criticisms which the little treatise drew forth from learned Musalmans were more valuable than the treatise itself, and disclosed the change which was taking place in the Muhammadan view regarding this alleged obligation. Orthodox and semi-orthodox doctors of Islam pulled to pieces the decisions which had been issued in support of Jihad. They based their conclusions mainly on the technical ground that, as the ruling power in India protected the Muhammadan religion, India was not a Dar-ul-harb, or country of the enemy, but a Dar-ul-Islam, or country where the true faith was practised undisturbed. In such a country there could be no lawful Jihad, or holy war. This was very satisfactory at the time, and was exactly what the little work had been intended to elicit.

But since then the discussion has passed into a very different stage. One Muhammadan writer after another has examined the philological and the legal significance of Jihad. A convenient compendium of this class has recently reached me from Maulavi Abu Said Mahomed Husain, of Lahore. It states the case in ten propositions, or points of law, with deductions from them. The final conclusions are that not only is Jihad or holy war unlawful in India, because the Muhammadans there enjoy the full exercise of their religion, but also that a true Jihad can nowhere be waged at present, or, indeed, 'ever since the lawful Caliph ceased to exist.' I state, without criticising, the maulavi's views. Some writers go further. They insist that Jihad literally means striving or strenuous exertion with a sense of duty to God. They hold that the industrious Muhammadan peasant while driving his plough, or the Muhammadan clerk while diligently bending over his desk, is in the true sense waging holy war. The Indian doctors of Islam are not content, however, with stating their own views. They unsparingly condemn the ignorance of the views which preceded them. 'No really learned man,' says the Lahore maulavi, 'either took part in the Mutiny, or willingly signed the fatwa declaring it to be lawful Jihad.'

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Musalmans*, by Sir William W. Hunter, K.C.S.I. London, Trübner & Co., 1871.

The progress of intelligence has exercised an equally powerful influence on the Hindu method of treating their sacred texts. With the exception of the new theistic sects, the Hindus would not formally deny the sanctions of their ancient scriptures any more than the Muhammadans would dispute the sanctions of the Koran. But the Hindus have an effective method of getting rid of the incubus of divine authority when it sits too heavily on the freedom of human action. They hold that their earlier scriptures embody a more direct inspiration, and have a higher warranty than their later ones. A new precept cannot supersede an older text. An appeal can, therefore, always be made from modern practice to the ancient scriptures. The sensible reformer in India, when he finds the sacred law no longer suitable to the existing state of things, does not say 'Let us make a new law,' but 'Let us go back to an older law.' The appeal is practically from the mediæval scriptures of the last 1,800 years to the Veda. These mediæval scriptures are voluminous, and on their enormous aggregation of doctrine and custom modern Hinduism rests. The Veda has but a meagre theology. It is a poetical rendering of an old world which has passed away rather than a legal code to regulate the present stage of human life. The Hindu reformers appeal, therefore, with confidence against present abuses to the Veda, for they know that those abuses will find no support in the Veda, and probably no reference to them whatever. Indeed, they may safely rely on the essential differences of the social state which the Veda represents to discover some Vedic text in an opposite sense to the modern custom. The abolition of widow-burning was commended to religious Hindus by showing that the Vedic texts, so far from enjoining the rite, were opposed to it. The abolition of child marriages is now advocated on the same ground, and the disabilities imposed by the present system of caste will be melted away in the same crucible. But they must first be felt by the Hindus to be abuses. As soon as Hindu gentlemen of good caste really desire to come to England in any numbers they will easily get rid of the prohibition against crossing the 'black water.' At the beginning of the Queen's reign the appeal back to the Veda was made by learned Englishmen; that appeal is now conducted by the Hindus themselves.

Indian customs will stand or fall according to their own power of adaptation to the wants of the age. But Indian conservatism will render the change a slow one. The *vis inertiae* is still the strongest force among the masses of the people. We must not forget this fact in considering the aspirations of the educated class. It is in order that we may take a calm and just view of the political products of Indian fermentation that I have dwelt on the religious and social working of the New Leaven.

## V.

## WHITHER ?

WHAT is to become of the India thus conquered, consolidated, and conciliated under the Queen? It is no answer that as India went on well enough for a long time under the Company so it may go on well enough for a long time under her Majesty's Government; for the main problem of holding India set before the Company was exactly the reverse of that which we have now, on pain of public calamity, to solve. The problem under the Company was to divide and govern; the problem of the Queen's Government in India is to unite and rule. Remember that the India of the Queen to-day is half as large again as the India of the Company at the commencement of her Majesty's reign. Remember, too, that when the Company allowed its problem to get the mastery, it fell. The Mutiny was the direct result of uniting the Princes and sepoys in a common animosity and fear before the Government had the appliances for rendering the force of the Empire swiftly available at every point. The unification of popular feeling outstripped the resources of centralisation.

The Queen's Government has deliberately accepted the risks of a united India. It is inspiring the Princes of India with common aims, it is associating the peoples of India on common platforms, it has bound together the provinces of India by railways and telegraphs, as they never were inspired, associated, or bound together under the Company. Its administration is being centralised as it never was centralised under the Company. The defences of India by land and sea depend upon the British army and upon the British fleet as they never depended under the Company. The foreign policy, the internal measures, the daily acts of the Indian Government

are controlled by orders from Westminster as they never were controlled under the Company. The Queen's Government of India has preferred the dangers of popular education to the perils of popular ignorance. For the isolated hazards of heterogeneous races it has substituted the calculated risks of a vast coalition of 200 millions of human beings, whom it is binding together by common interests. Those common interests are finding a powerful and persistent advocacy in a free native Press such as was quite unknown at any previous period in India. An analogy drawn from the Company's century of office is a false analogy when applied to the India of the Queen; for the conditions are essentially different, and the problem is no longer how to govern a divided India, but how, having united India, to rule.

I should be undeserving of public attention if I were to indulge either in optimistic prophesyings or in pessimistic forebodings. I shall confine myself to setting forth from such knowledge as I possess a few of the difficulties which surround, and some of the dangers which seem to threaten, the government of a united India. The first question is the fundamental problem of population. The result of civilised rule in India has been to produce a strain on the food-producing powers of the country such as it had never before to bear. It has become a truism of Indian statistics that the removal of the old cruel checks on population in an Asiatic country is by no means an unmixed blessing to an Asiatic people. The Hindu and the Muhammadan are alike unrestrained by Malthusian scruples. The restrictions which war, pestilence, and famine formerly imposed on their increase they refuse to impose upon their own actions. That increase has of late years expressed itself in large and appalling figures. But when we look more narrowly into the figures they are not without some comfort. The increase is most rapid in the parts of India which can best support it. While population in several of the densely thronged Gangetic districts has reached the stationary stage, it increased in thinly peopled Assam by 18 per cent. during the nine years between the census of 1872 and that of 1881, and in the Central Provinces by over 25 per cent. While the valley of the Ganges is yearly over-cropped to supply its

congested millions with food, vast areas of land on the outskirts of that valley still await the plough. To take only the two Chief Commissionerships already named, the cultivable lands still unoccupied in Assam and the Central Provinces, deducting Government forests and the area within great private estates, exceed seventeen million acres, or more than the whole area in Great Britain and Ireland returned under corn crops, green crops, grass, and all other crops in 1879 (before the present depression of agriculture set in), excluding, of course, permanent pasture.

With these and similar facts before us I do not think that the increase of population is a problem which will beat the Queen's Government of India. In this, as in other difficult social questions, India has been passing through a transition stage. During the last half-century of the Company the increase of the people outstripped the appliances for their distribution. The internal peace and prosperity of British rule led to a growth of population of which even the ablest servants of the Company formed an altogether inadequate estimate. We have the highest authority for stating that shortly before the Permanent Settlement in 1793 a third of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal was destitute of inhabitants. We have an absolute knowledge that when Bengal passed to the Crown in 1858 the Company under-estimated by one-half the population then transferred. I do not say this by way of reproach. The Company had to build up its rule with the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. It substituted an immeasurably superior administration in India for the administration which preceded it. But the truth remains that it bequeathed in Bengal to the Queen's Government a congested population of whose increase it possessed no accurate knowledge, and for whose distribution it had constructed practically no railways. The few hundred miles of single line which it left behind in India have multiplied to 13,000. But the increase has been necessarily gradual, and until the routes now in progress to the Central Provinces and to Eastern and North-Eastern Bengal are completed their ultimate effect on the congested districts cannot be known.

The obvious remedy of emigration has meanwhile been tried and has failed. The official *Gazettes* give from time to time the

statistics of those who seek their fortunes in Assam or beyond the seas, and the amount of the savings which they bring back. But their numbers, although making a fair show in figures, are altogether inadequate to the facts to be dealt with. In a country where there is no poor law, and where caste and the system of corporate family aid which caste represents alone stand between the accidents of poverty and absolute want, men naturally dread to go forth with their women and children from the one spot on earth in which they are sure of help in their hour of need. The vernacular school is only very slowly making the Bengal peasant understand that within 500 miles of his overcrowded hamlet there are lands which would yield him two-fold better crops at one-fifth of the rent. To a Bengal peasant family, unless aided by the State or by foreign capitalists, a 500 miles' journey without a railway is about as practicable as a migration to a moon of Jupiter. The Government has meanwhile laboured by legislation to make the existing area of cultivated land go as far as possible to feed the people. It has stepped in between the monopoly of the soil which over-population creates for the landholders and the consequent rise in rents. It has given a clear and full tenant-right to the cultivator, with every legislative encouragement to increase the produce of his fields. But land laws can only mitigate, without remedying, the pressure on the soil in an agricultural country in which the population multiplies and the amount of land stands still. During the past five years an inquiry has been silently conducted as to the extensions of tillage recently made, and still possible, in every district of British India. How far direct action by Government may be practicable in aiding the movements of the people to new lands, is a question which must be deliberately reconsidered with a view to the new appliances of distribution now at the Government's disposal. The spread of education is slowly but surely lessening the peasant's ancient dread of migration, and the railway is every year making it more possible for him to migrate. The battle of civilisation against over-population has not yet been lost, and it may yet be won.

The difficulties of governing a united India are of our own making. As the prosperity of the people under British rule,



the cessation of internal wars, and State-aid on an enormous scale in time of famine have led to an increased population whom it is not easy to feed, so our fearless system of public instruction has inspired that population with aims and ambitions which it is not possible at once to satisfy. We have taken the young Princes of India out of the seraglio and placed them under high-minded English officers or in schools of chiefs. For the perpetual flattery of women we have substituted a training in manly sports and in manly arts. Their tutors and governors have constantly kept before them the English ideal of public duty attaching to a great position. We have done all this because, in the words of Lord Mayo, we wish them to be strong; to realise the high responsibilities of rulers of States, and to be able to discharge those responsibilities in a noble spirit. Can we be surprised that this sort of education is beginning to bear its fruits—that the young Princes of India should no longer be content with the old rôle of the stage-king in a Court pageant; that with 55,000,000 people to govern they decline to live by deputy, or to accept an existence of *tableaux vivants*; that with an army of a third of a million at their command they should claim to take a share in the defence of the Empire?

In India it is most true that it is the unexpected which happens. Until a few weeks ago Indian statesmen thought that, although the problems of the people and of the Press might be urgent, yet that the problem of the Princes might well wait. A polite letter from the Nizam to Lord Dufferin has completely altered the situation. This young Prince is essentially a product of our new system of educating the feudatory rulers of India. He has brought the whole question to a direct issue by offering 600,000*l.* towards the frontier defences. Ever since Lord Mayo we have always been able to count upon the swords of our feudatories in event of war. What the Nizam courteously asks is that he may be allowed to share the cost of the needful precautions during peace. He lays this request not only before the Viceroy, but he comes, as the premier Muhammadan vassal of the Queen, directly before the British nation with the text of his letter, telegraphed by His Highness's orders from Hyderabad to *The Times*. The spectacle of this generous and powerful young Prince begging

to be allowed to be of use to England may well make the English heart beat high. It is not surprising that the British Press should have urged the immediate acceptance of so splendid a token of loyalty, and wondered that there could be a moment's delay. But the Government of India knows well that this offer, disinterested and noble as it is, may force on the decision of momentous issues. The Nizam does not stand alone among the Princes of India in his loyal aspirations. No Englishman, and certainly no successful English statesman like Lord Dufferin, can help a quickening of the pulse in the midst of a great outburst of English public sentiment such as the Nizam's offer has called forth. But England would have cause to augur ill of a Viceroy who permitted the measured march of Indian policy to break into an emotional pace for any expression of opinion less fully instructed and less deliberately matured than his own.

The Indian Government will doubtless, at the proper time, render its reasons to Parliament for its present action. Meanwhile, without glancing in any way at the individual case, it is possible to indicate the gravity of the issue involved by a new departure in our dealings with the feudatory States. I am one of those who frankly believe that a new departure is becoming inevitable. I do not think that the British Government can, with its new military exigencies, go on for ever giving military protection to feudatory India under ancient arrangements made before those exigencies arose. The military protection originally required for the native States was protection against one another and against their own subjects. But the irresistible march of events has now rendered the Indian frontier almost conterminous with the armed camp of Europe, and has involved a costliness and a completeness of equipment never before contemplated. The ablest of the feudatory chiefs perceive this and say in effect: 'Why should we Indian Princes continue to play at soldiering with one-third of a million of tin troops? Take these men, or as many of them as you want, discipline them at our expense, either up to the point of effectiveness required for active service or up to the point sufficient for a second line of reserve. You will give us a career, and you will enormously strengthen the Empire.' But one great historical fact stares us in the face. The main function of the armies of

British India has hitherto been to keep watch and ward over the native States. A comparatively small body of highly disciplined troops have accomplished this task, partly by great cantonments located at strategic points of a network of railways, partly by ineffectiveness of the feudatory levies. How far do the altered circumstances of India and the growing loyalty of the Indian Princes justify a departure from this system? How far is it yet safe to supersede a policy of watch and ward by a policy of trust? To stand still is, I believe, impossible. But a false step in a forward movement may, as every one can see for himself, imperil British rule. Woe to the nation which decides such a question by self-seeking party speeches or by sensational magazine articles, or in any otherwise than by the cautious and deliberate action of those who have the complete knowledge to guide their decision, and who are directly responsible for the results.

This question of confidence lies at the root of our whole position in India. How far is it yet safe to trust the Princes; how far is it yet safe to trust the people? For the Queen's Proclamation and the Queen's government of India have also inspired the people with aspirations unknown under any previous rule. I have shown how these aspirations have been hitherto met by incorporating the natives of India into the administration. The Public Service Commission now sitting at Calcutta will have something more to say on this subject within the next few months. But we have deliberately educated the upper classes to aspire not only to administrative offices, but also to political power. These aspirations not only find utterance in the native Press and on the platforms of hundreds of local associations, but are authoritatively formulated and reiterated each cold weather by a powerful representative body drawn together from almost all the provinces of India, and meeting at one or other of the Presidency capitals. This self-constituted chamber of deputies forms a very significant phenomenon of a united India. I do not believe that the British nation can for any long period put aside some of the questions with which its programme deals. If I did not believe this on the grounds of generosity and justice, I should come to the same conclusion on the grounds of expediency and prudence.

I believe, too, that we can very gradually and very safely respond to some of the claims made upon us. Any real necessity for a direct representative Government in India has not yet arisen. I sincerely trust, however, that India will before long be represented indirectly by Indian gentlemen elected by English constituencies to the British Parliament. The best men may not go at first, for the serious political leaders of India have hitherto been prevented by caste and other considerations from coming to England. But they will come in time.

It is impossible for an Englishman acquainted with the facts of Indian finance to read the report of its annual scurry through Parliament without pain. It is difficult for Indian journalists to write about those debates without indignation. A few old civilians, more or less out of touch with the altered condition of things in India, criticise certain details with the foregone conclusion that they cannot alter them. The true issues are not raised. India complains, for example, that England has practically compelled India to give up its moderate tariff of sea customs, although almost all countries in India's stage of progress depend largely on external customs duties, and although England down to our own day did so herself. India complains that English policy compels India to borrow yearly large sums of money, for which England would probably find herself, if the worst came, morally compelled to acknowledge responsibility, but which meanwhile have to be raised at Indian instead of English rates of interest. India complains that while the Queen's Government has said India shall have an annual Budget, yet that Budget, unless it imposes a new tax, is not brought before the Indian Legislature. Except in this contingency, the whole public expenditure of India, stated at the nominal official exchange at seventy millions sterling, is altogether exempted from discussion in the Indian Legislative Council, and is run through an almost empty Parliament in a few hours per annum. I do not at present say how far these complaints of the natives of India are well founded, or how far they can be remedied. But they are complaints on which it is expedient that England should hear the views of Indian gentlemen in the House of Commons; and the constituency will

deserve well of the nation which sends the first native of India to Parliament.

Meanwhile a principle has been silently adopted in India which furnishes a provisional outlet for the native aspirations towards a share in the Government. The system of nomination to the Supreme and the Provincial Legislative Councils is being conscientiously worked, so as to render it a system of representation. For some time after the transfer of India to the Crown a seat in the Supreme Legislative Council was regarded as one of the many decorative incidents in the life of a great Raja. Now, an Indian political leader may be made a Raja for good work done in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, but an Indian gentleman will not be made a member of that Council because he is a Raja. I only state what every Indian publicist would acknowledge, that the most perfect electoral system could not select truer representatives of the Hindu community than the Hindu members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council and of the Legislative Councils of Bombay and Bengal. The same remark probably applies to Madras, but I cannot speak of its Council from my own knowledge. The representative character of the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, by the conscientious exercise of the system of nomination, is capable of further developments. As the powers of those Councils are gradually extended, and when the question of their right of interpellation comes, as it must before long come, before Parliament, their effectiveness as organs of representation will be immensely increased.

Meanwhile there is a body capable of rendering great services alike to England and to India whose capacity for good is impaired by its non-representative character. The Secretary of State's Council has of late years been strengthened by members who are known to represent the commercial interests of the Anglo-Indian community. This is right, and there can be no question as to the access of financial practical skill which the Council received last spring. But the deliberate system of seeking out men who represent the views or possess the confidence of the native Indian community, which is giving to the Indian Legislative Councils a truly representative character, has not yet been adopted in regard to the Council of the Secretary

of State. The appointments to that Council are made fairly and openly, with an eye to the administrative experience of the few possible candidates, or with a view to reward their past services. But the Council would be strengthened, and it would greatly strengthen the hands of the Secretary of State, if it contained one or two Indian gentlemen, or gentlemen who were known to represent the views of the native community. As soon as Indian gentlemen find their way into Parliament this concession will be inevitable, for the Secretary of State will require the authority of native opinion at his back when he has to face it in front. In his Council, as in the House of Commons, there may be a difficulty in getting real leaders of Indian political thought at first. But that difficulty is daily growing less. When one reflects how weak and unfruitful would have been the long discussions on the Land Law passed a couple of years ago by the Viceroy's Council for Bengal without the aid of the working native member in the Select Committee, one wonders how the Secretary of State's Council can seriously attempt to control Indian affairs without similar assistance. The difficulty of getting the best men to come to England must, I repeat, not be underrated. But the Government of India could at this moment pick out one or two native leaders, sober and cautious men, who would be regarded by the native community as true representatives of its interests, and who might not be unwilling to represent those interests for a period of two or three years in the Secretary of State's Council.

Can we wonder, with these and other outstanding problems unsolved, that a free native Press is becoming a serious embarrassment in India? We have systematically during thirty years nurtured the educated classes in political aspirations; we have given them an absolutely unrestricted liberty in demanding what they aspire to. Daily, weekly, and monthly these demands are being enforced in about 300 native newspapers over the length of India, sometimes with bitterness, and not always with knowledge. The Government of India, alone among civilised Governments, is destitute of the power of reply. In constitutional countries the right of interpellation, or of asking questions in Parliament, enables the Executive promptly

to state the facts on any question of public interest. In a constitutional country of the most advanced type, like England, the political party for the time being in office has also the powerful aid of its own section of the Press. More despotic or autocratic Governments have their official and semi-official journals. The Indian Government alone has no power of quietly and promptly making the facts authoritatively known. We see there a native Press vehemently advocating native interests and an Anglo-Indian Press vehemently advocating Anglo-Indian interests, with the Viceroy at intervals asking his Legislative Council not to consider him out of order if he makes a statement on a grave question of public importance; and hard-beset secretaries, happily also at intervals, resorting to the perilous practice of writing leading articles in the guise of Government resolutions. By the time that the ordinary official papers reach the *Gazette* their interest is usually of an academic sort.

If little is done to inform Indian public opinion in regard to the present, almost nothing has been seriously done to instruct it with regard to the past. The motives, the actions, the characters of the Englishmen who built up the British Empire in the East are still at the mercy of every common defamer. Now and then a powerful English writer, like Sir James Stephen, flashes the bull's-eye of judicial inquiry into some dark corner of misrepresentation. Or a mature scholar, like Horace Hayman Wilson, 'edits' our one standard history of British rule with a running protest of footnotes to almost every page of the text. Or a young Le Bas essayist, like Mr. Rapson, breaks his maiden lance against the old windmills; or a wearied philosopher, like Sir Henry Maine, dismisses a whole series of historical misstatements with calm contempt. It has become the fashion not only to expose the inaccuracies, but also to impeach the veracity, of our only comprehensive Indian historian, James Mill. I, for one, can take no part in this latter line of attack. I have had opportunities for knowing how seriously Mill's misconceptions warp educated native opinion with regard to England's action in India during the past, and tend to obscure the true issues of Indian legislation at present. But we must remember that Mill had never set foot in India, that he knew not a single Indian language, was abso-

lutely destitute of the instincts of an Indian administrator, and altogether ignorant of the actual conditions of the Indian races. Instead of scoffing at his mistakes, one should rather admire the marvellous verisimilitude of Indian history which the philosopher-clerk evolved from the letter-books of a London office. Nor need we despair that the Queen's Government of India, with unrivalled materials for a true history at its disposal, will yet awake to the duty which most civilised Governments now acknowledge, of rendering the recorded facts available in such a shape as to enable a correct popular judgment to be formed.<sup>1</sup> An unrestricted native Press, apart from any wilful misrepresentations or race hostility, will continue a growing embarrassment to the Government so long as Indian public opinion remains uninformed in respect of the present and uninstructed in regard to the past. The Queen's Government of India has elected for the inconveniences of popular education in place of the perils of popular ignorance. It is now eating the sour fruits of half-knowledge.

The difficulties of governing a united India are, I repeat, of our own making. For only the British nation would have dared deliberately to train up the peoples of India to govern themselves. I believe that this generous policy has also proved the safest policy. If the experience of the past teaches anything, it is that the dangers of ignorance and the defective appliances of centralisation constitute the greatest joint-risk which a foreign Government of India can be called to encounter. I have not underrated the political problems of a united and an educated India. But I regard those problems, if dealt with in time and in a serious spirit by England, as preferable to the perils which preceded them. I am also confident that as Englishmen in India mastered the perils of the past, so will they, with God's help, solve the problems of the present. The Queen's reign found the people of India a collection of heterogeneous races. It has moulded them into the beginnings of a nation. 'In their prosperity,' to quote her Majesty's noble words in 1858, 'will be our strength, and in their gratitude our best reward.'

<sup>1</sup> The *History of British India* (Longmans), Vol. 1, by Sir William W. Hunter, was published in 1899, and Vol. 2 in 1900, a few months after the death of the author.—[ED.]



## II

### POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>

DURING the past year, 1890, the Government has declared its policy in regard to three important questions in India. It has accepted the offers of troops made by the Princes of the Feudatory States ; it has shown how far it is willing to accede to the wishes of our own subjects in the British Provinces with reference to the expansion of the Legislative Councils ; it has taken action to meet the demands of the social reformers for the protection of child-brides. I should like to explain briefly the influences now at work in India which have led to these three movements, and the stage which each of the movements has now reached.

In so doing I may have to repeat ideas to which I have already given expression. It is only by again and again insisting on the altered conditions of the India of our day that we can make clear its problems, or gauge the forces at work. For it is not the old India of romance and adventure with which we have to deal—the old India of magnificent emperors, and marble palaces, and jewelled gods. It is not even the India of the East India Company, with its heroic battles and its rapid fortunes, and its retired Anglo-Indian nabobs from Calcutta, whose yellow cheeks and abominable tempers were the laughing-stock of the English stage. It is the new and commonplace India of our own day, where men are beginning to be moved by the same political aspirations which have made England what she is ; where they are trying to solve their own hard social problems, as we are trying to solve ours ; where the struggle for life is gradually disclosing itself as a struggle between labour

<sup>1</sup> *The Contemporary Review*, February 1891.

and capital, even as in our own land. It is the India of the railways and of the Factories' Commission, the India of the movement for bettering the condition of women, the India of the annual political Congress—in a word, the India of the Queen.

What has brought about this change in the India of our day? It is an uprising of the Indian intellect, an awakening of Indian thought and Indian aspirations, such as the world has not seen since the Revival of Learning in Europe. Until thirty-seven years ago such education as existed in India rested chiefly on a sectarian basis. It was principally conducted by the priestly class of the Hindus, the Maulavis of the Musalman mosques, and the missionaries of various Christian bodies. During the last thirty-seven years Indian education has been re-organized on a non-sectarian basis, and Government schools and colleges have been thrown open throughout the land to all Indian subjects of the Queen, irrespective of their race, or their creed, or their caste. The result has been to create a system of public instruction, based on Western knowledge and Western enlightenment, which forms a new era in the life of the people.

One of its consequences has been to convert what was formerly a hostile India into a loyal India. We have during the last quarter of a century grown so accustomed to the loyalty of India that we are apt to take it as a matter of course. But to the rulers of India under the East India Company the one thing impossible seemed to be the creation of a loyal India. I will not refer to the malignant rejoicings which broke forth in the native Courts when a great disaster like the destruction of our army in Afghanistan, in 1842, made it seem safe for them to show their hatred. I shall take a period when Lord Wellesley's policy—the policy upon which the East India Company's rule rested during the first half of the century—was achieving its culminating triumphs; and I shall quote the words of one who knew India with the perfect knowledge of a man who rose from the ranks of the Civil Service to the Governor-Generalship.

'All India,' wrote, in 1824, the distinguished administrator who was afterwards created Lord Metcalfe, 'all India is at all

times looking out for our downfall. The people everywhere would rejoice, or fancy that they would rejoice, at our destruction.' In another State document he declared, in 1814: 'Our situation in India has always been precarious. We are still a handful of Europeans governing an immense empire without any firm hold on the country, having warlike and powerful enemies on all our frontiers, and the spirit of disaffection dormant but rooted universally among our subjects. We might now be swept away in a single whirlwind. We are without root. The best affected natives would think of a change of Government with indifference, and in the North-Western Provinces there is hardly a man who would not hope for benefit from a change.' 'Shall we ever,' he asked despondently, in 1820, after the final conquest of the Marathas and Pindaris by the British arms—'shall we ever contrive to attach the native population to our Government? and can this be done by identifying the interests of the upper classes with our own? Is it possible in any way to identify their interests with ours? To all three questions, if put to me, I should answer *No!*'

It was in this despair of ever conciliating India that the ablest of the Company's servants went through their lives. In order to understand the new forces at work in India, and in order to deal with them fearlessly and righteously, it is first of all needful to understand how profoundly they are changed for the better, compared with the forces which the East India Company had to encounter. Can we ever conciliate India? This was the vital question to which the ablest administrators deliberately answered No, in the India of the Company. It remains the vital question to which we deliberately answer, Yes, in the India of the Queen. As a matter of fact, the task of conciliation has been accomplished. It is the beneficent legacy which the past thirty-three years of the Queen's rule in India now hands down to the incoming century. The desire of the classes whom we sometimes hear spoken of as the troublesome classes in India is no longer (as in Lord Metcalfe's time) to get rid of our Government, but to be admitted to a larger share in it. The problem of British rule in India is no longer to coerce and crush down the perpetual disaffection of hostile races, but

to safely direct the new consolidating forces which have been evoked in a conciliated and a loyal India.

This change forms the key to the whole situation. It has profoundly modified the views of the native population towards our rule. Every national joy or sorrow, whether in the family of our Sovereign or in the life of the British people, is now felt by the Indian races to be a joy or sorrow in which they also share. If our Indian administration presses hardly on them at any point, they meet together no longer to rise in arms, but to petition for reform. Internal insurrection, which Lord Metcalfe declared to be a perpetual danger, has disappeared out of the calculation of the Governors of Indian provinces. External mishaps to our power, such as a defeat of our troops or a check in our foreign policy, no longer send a thrill of disloyal delight through India, but call forth eager and enthusiastic offers of their whole military resources from the Princes, and of volunteering from the peoples of our own provinces. Compare the triumphant outburst of hatred against us, evoked by our temporary reverses in the first Burmese war under the Company, with the outburst of loyalty produced by the Penjdeh incident under the Crown.

‘Your Lordship,’ wrote Sir Charles Metcalfe to the Governor-General sixty-seven years ago, ‘will probably have heard from various quarters that the Burmese war has excited the strongest sensation throughout India. Everything of an unprosperous character has been exaggerated and magnified. Delay in decided success has been represented as entire failure and disastrous defeat. Our real victories and the exploits of our troops have been unnoticed, while the most wanton and extravagant reports of our approaching downfall have gained credit. I have seen a native paper stating that the Commander-in-Chief had been killed in an action with the Burmans near to Calcutta, and that your Lordship had put an end to yourself by poison!’

Contrast these truculent rejoicings at a rumoured reverse of the British arms under the Company with the wave of loyal and patriotic feeling which swept across India in 1885 at the tidings that the Queen’s representatives had received a check at Penjdeh in Afghanistan from the Russians. The Indian races

were again ready to rush to arms, but to arms no longer for the annihilation, but for the defence of the British Government. The native Princes throughout India vied with each other in pressing the English Government to accept freewill offerings from them of money and transport and troops. Their one desire was to place the whole resources of their States, without fee or payment, at the disposal of the British Viceroy. They not only offered their armies fully equipped to take the field, but they asked as a privilege that they should themselves be permitted to defray the charge of their troops while fighting the battles of the Queen.

That crisis passed off without actual war. The incident, however, had awakened an enthusiastic loyalty to the British Government in India on which Russia had not reckoned. While the Princes of India were offering their armies, the natives in our own provinces were asking to be enrolled as volunteers. Splendid as were the testimonies borne throughout the world to the wisdom and justice of Queen Victoria's reign in her Jubilee Year of 1887, still more impressive was that outburst of stern loyalty in India two years previously, those magnificent offers of patriotism from Princes and people, among whom a new-born sense of union with England had grown up under her Majesty's rule.

Nor was it a merely passing ebullition of sentiment. It was the embodiment of a deliberate conviction on the part of the native chiefs and the educated classes in British India that their interests are bound up in the maintenance of the British power. Down to the end of the East India Company's rule, such an outburst of loyal enthusiasm would have been regarded as impossible. Not only did the ablest servants of the Company despair of ever winning the real and disinterested support of the natives to British rule, but shrewd non-official observers took an equally hopeless view. The most distinguished of Anglo-Indian journalists, who gained his experience at the close of the Company's rule, has scouted the idea of any actual existence of a British Indian Empire. His belief until recently continued to be that our power in India consisted solely of a close official corporation of English civilians and a garrison of English troops. 'That corporation and that garrison,' he

said, 'constitute the "Indian Empire." There is nothing else. Banish those fifteen hundred men in black, defeat that slender garrison in red, and the Empire has ended. . . . They are the Empire, and there is no other.'

To this conception of the Indian Empire—a conception which was a perfectly just one under the East India Company—the natives of British India have themselves made answer. 'If there were ever to arise,' said the President of the Indian National Congress at Madras—that is to say, the President of a native and spontaneous body of delegates from all the provinces of India, who meet together each year to express the feelings and the wishes of their countrymen—if there were ever to arise—which God forbid—any great struggle between Russia and Great Britain for the supremacy in India, who is best able to judge of the relative merits of the two empires? It is we, the educated natives, that are best qualified to judge, because it is we who know and are best able to appreciate, for instance, the blessings of the right of public meeting, the liberty of action and of speech, and high education, which we enjoy under Great Britain; whereas, probably, under Russia we should have nothing but a haughty and despotic Government, whose chief glory would consist in vast military organization, aggressions upon our neighbours, and great military exploits.'

This new feeling, on the part alike of the Princes and the people of India, of a common interest with England in the stability of British rule, has given rise to two of the movements referred to in my opening paragraph.

The one is a movement among the Feudatory Princes of India to be more actively incorporated in the military defence of the Empire; the other is a movement among our subjects in the British provinces, to be more actively incorporated in the work of Indian government. The question before the Queen's representatives in India during the past five years has been how far it may be safe to trust the Princes and the peoples of India to help us in the defence and in the government of the Indian Empire. This question of confidence now lies at the root of our whole position in India. How far is it safe to trust the native princes of the Feudatory States; how far is it safe to trust the influential classes in our own provinces?

To both of these vital questions the British Government has, as I mentioned, now given its reply. It has plainly told the native princes of the Feudatory States that it has confidence in their loyalty, and that it accepts their freewill offerings of troops. The matter was brought to an issue by the magnificent offer of the Nizam, the leading Muhammadan Feudatory Prince in India, of £600,000 towards the frontier defences of the Empire. Other princes followed with offers of money, men, animals of transport, and the equipage of war. The British Government has not seen fit to accept offerings of money from the Feudatory chiefs. But it has accepted their loyal offerings of troops. We must remember that while the British Government has only an army (European and native) of about 220,000 men in India, the Feudatory States maintain on their own account, and at their own expense, separate armies which aggregate over 350,000 men. Under the East India Company these vast bodies of troops were regarded as a standing menace to the British authority. In the India of the Queen, and under the influence of the sentiments of loyalty and united interest which have grown up, the armies of the native States are becoming a source of strength, and not of weakness, to the ruling power. The result is that the English Government finds that it can now, with safety to itself, inaugurate a new system by which the flower of the Feudatory armies will be trained to form a reserve for the British forces in India. A certain number of picked men in the various Feudatory States who have offered their troops have been selected to be trained into an imperial contingent. The contingents already offered aggregate 25,000 men, the *élite* of the cavalry and infantry of the native States, besides transport and artillery.

It would be wrong to shut our eyes to the risks which may attend this new departure in the military policy of India. Those risks have at the outset been reduced to a minimum by declining the offers of artillery, on the ground that it 'is an arm requiring such scientific training that the native States could not be expected to maintain it in a condition of efficiency for modern warfare.' Great care has also been taken, by observing a wise distribution in regard to the contingents, to render any combination geographically difficult, and indeed

almost impossible by reason of the barriers of caste and race. The Government of India has, moreover, recognised from the first the necessity of keeping a firm hand on the movement and exercising a steady supervision over it. During the present winter, 1890-1, the new imperial contingents have been reviewed at places by the Viceroy in person, and elsewhere by British generals. Judging from the high praise which Lord Lansdowne has felt himself justified in according to the troops, they promise to add an effective reserve to the war array of British India, a reserve which will not cost a rupee to the British Indian Exchequer.

Each of the imperial contingents is maintained entirely at the cost of the native State which offers it. It is commanded by the Feudatory chief, and it is officered by native gentlemen and noblemen of the State to which it belongs. So anxious is the British Government that the movement shall be altogether a spontaneous one on the part of the Feudatory chiefs, uninfluenced by pressure from outside, that it only consents to lend a very few subordinate officers for the purposes of drill and instruction alone. The direct control and management of the new imperial contingents will rest with the native chiefs who have asked to be allowed to maintain them as freewill offerings of their loyalty. This is the answer which the British Government has made to the imperialising movement among the Feudatory Princes of India.

In the British territories the new sense of a common interest with the Government has taken a different form. Its most conspicuous outcome is the Indian National Congress. This body consists, as I have said, of delegates from the various provinces of India, who meet together in the last week of each year to discuss the political needs of the country. The Congress has been in active existence throughout six years. It selects as its place of annual meeting one of the Presidency towns, or some other great centre in India, and has in this way familiarised the various divisions of the country with its work. During the past five years its numbers have increased from a few hundred to over a thousand delegates. At its sixth session, held in Calcutta a month ago, fourteen hundred delegates attended. Indeed, it is now stated that to prevent the Congress growing



into too unwieldy a body, arrangements have had to be made to keep down the number of delegates to one thousand. Whether we agree with the proposals of the Congress or not, it would be foolish to deny its significance. For the first time in the history of India the ruling power has thus been brought into contact with an authoritative expression of the wants and aspirations of the races whom it governs. Under the Mughal Emperors of India such an assemblage would not only have been impossible from want of means of communication between the provinces, but it would have been regarded as a danger to the throne. The railways have made an Indian National Congress possible, and the loyal sentiments of the people towards the Queen have rendered it safe.

What is it that the educated classes of India, as represented by their delegates in the Indian Congress, now ask of their British rulers? Some of their requests deal with questions of local administration. They ask, for example, that the excise shall be administered in such a way as not to lead to the growth of intemperance and to drinking habits among the people. They ask that they shall be allowed to bear arms as volunteers in the defence of the Empire. They ask for certain changes in the revenue system, so that taxation in the form of the salt duty shall press less heavily on the poor. They ask that they shall be more largely admitted to the public services which administer the affairs of their districts and provinces. They ask that the House of Commons shall exercise a more effective control over the Indian revenues and expenditure, by taking up the Indian Budget at an earlier period in the session, instead of hurrying through it in the last days of Parliament before empty benches.

But beyond all such requests for administrative improvements, the Indian National Congress asks that the natives of India shall have a more effective voice in making their own laws. Thirty years ago, shortly after India had passed from the Company to the Queen's Government, Legislative Councils were created for India by Act of Parliament. The chief of these bodies is the Viceroy's Legislative Council, which makes laws applying to the whole Indian Empire, or to any part of it. The other Legislative Councils are the Provincial Councils in Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and now also in the North-West,

which make laws for their respective provinces. It will suffice to explain the constitution of the most important of them—namely, the Viceroy's Legislative Council.

The Viceroy's Legislative Council is mainly made up of the high officials who form what may be called the Ministry, or technically the Executive Council, in India. To these official members are added certain 'additional' members, whom the Viceroy selects chiefly from the influential classes of natives and from the leaders of the British mercantile community in India. He also appoints certain other additional members, selected for him by the Provincial Governments, in order to represent the views and requirements of the various provinces.

This system has, on the whole, worked well during the past thirty years. But the educated classes among the natives now point out certain defects in its working, and ask that these defects shall be remedied. For example, they urge that it is not right that the whole revenue and expenditure of the Indian Empire should, except when a new tax is required, be exempted from discussion in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. As the British Parliament only deals with the Indian Budget during the last expiring hours of each session, the natives complain that the Indian national expenditure is subject to no real constitutional control, either by the Legislative Council in India or by the House of Commons in England. They accordingly ask that the Indian Budget shall be regularly discussed every year in the Viceroy's Legislative Council.

In the next place, the educated natives of India, speaking through their National Congress, desire that the members of the Legislative Councils shall have the right to ask questions, somewhat in the same way as, but in a less degree than, the members of the English Parliament have this right. At present no member of an Indian Legislative Council can bring forward any business without the consent of the Government. Nor can he ask any question as to alleged miscarriages of justice, or as to alleged abuses in the administration, or in fact as to any subject whatever. This is now found to be not only a substantial grievance to the natives, but also a serious inconvenience to the Government. For it often happens that the action of Government is misunderstood by the Indian Press, and

bitterly condemned for want of proper information, when a few words asked and answered in the Legislative Council would make the whole matter clear.

A still more important request is being made by the natives through their annual National Congress for an increase in the number of members of the Legislative Councils. The constitution of the Viceregal and the chief Provincial Legislative Councils was practically fixed thirty years ago, when no large class of highly educated English-speaking natives existed who could supply effective members of the Legislative Councils. But during the past thirty years a new generation of influential natives has grown up into middle life, trained in our Indian State schools and colleges, and perfectly competent to assist in the task of Indian legislation. The natives of India now ask that this important change shall be recognised, and that the number of the non-official members of the Legislative Councils shall be increased.

As a matter of fact, the Government of India and her Majesty's Ministers at home have admitted in principle the reasonableness of the three foregoing requests in regard to the Legislative Councils. Lord Cross's Bill, which was introduced in the last session of Parliament, provided for the annual discussion of the Indian expenditure in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, for giving the members the right to ask questions in the Legislative Councils, under suitable safeguards, and for a cautious increase in the number of the members of those Councils. It did not provide for nearly so many new members as the natives through their National Congress had asked for, but it took a moderate step in this direction.

There is, however, a fourth request put forward by the natives through their yearly National Congress, with regard to which a wide difference of opinion exists. Hitherto, all the non-official members of the Legislative Councils have been appointed by the Viceroy for his own Council, and by the Provincial Governors for their Councils. But, as a matter of fact, both the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors have consulted the leading native and mercantile bodies in making their selections. For example, it is now understood that the Commercial member in the Viceroy's Council represents the views of

the British commercial community in Calcutta. The great Native Landholders' Association in Bengal is, as a rule, represented in the Viceroy's Legislative Council by a native gentleman or nobleman who gives utterance to its wants. To a certain moderate extent, therefore, the Indian Legislative Councils have assumed a quasi-representative character.

The educated natives of India, speaking through their annual National Congress, now ask the Government to go a step further and to allow them to elect their own representatives to the Legislative Councils. One party among them went so far as to create a paper constitution for all India, with a cut-and-dried scheme of electoral colleges and constituencies, which should return so many members to the Legislative Councils calculated per million of the population. A Bill embodying that scheme was introduced into Parliament by Mr. Bradlaugh last session, but little practical progress was made with it. The Indian National Congress has now given up this hasty proposal, and wishes to leave it to the Government, under the control of Parliament, to work out such an elective system for India as may be found to be really suited to the country.

The views of the Government in regard to the adoption of the elective principle are not so clear as in regard to other requests made by the Indian National Congress. It is stated that no fewer than three Viceroys and several eminent Governors of Indian Provinces are disposed to give a cautious trial to representative government in India. Lord Cross's Bill, as introduced last session, did not, however, accept this principle. But on an amendment made by Lord Northbrook, a very distinguished former Viceroy of India, it appeared that her Majesty's Ministry were not unwilling to reconsider the question, and that a qualified recognition of the elective principle might be introduced at a later stage into the Bill. The Bill for India was, unfortunately, crowded out by other measures affecting Ireland and England. It is understood that a similar Bill will be brought forward again during the coming session [1891].

Meanwhile Mr. Bradlaugh has again prepared a rival Bill, embodying the new proposals of the Indian National Congress. Those proposals perhaps go further than even Mr. Bradlaugh or the Congress itself would eventually insist on. But the

difference between Mr. Bradlaugh's proposed Bill and the Bill which we may expect from the Government is no longer a difference of principle, but of degree. Lord Cross's Bill of last session went a certain length ; Lord Northbrook would have liked it to go a little further ; and Mr. Bradlaugh, on behalf of the Indian National Congress, would like it to go a good deal further.

The various measures now put forward enable Parliament to understand what the educated classes in India, as represented by their yearly political Congress, desire. They wish for a recognition of the elective principle in the constitution of the Legislative Councils ; they wish for a numerical expansion of the Legislative Councils ; they wish that more extended powers shall be granted to those bodies. Many of them wish for these reforms in a larger measure and at a quicker pace than the Government deems prudent.

During the debates on Lord Cross's Bill last session two things became apparent. In the first place, that Parliament will not allow a great constitutional change in our system of governing India to be rushed upon it. In the second place, that both Parliament and her Majesty's Ministers are perfectly aware that the time for some advance has come. The arrangements for the introduction of the elective principle into India must take time, and the safeguards required to ensure its satisfactory operation can only be worked out province by province, and by the responsible authorities in India. But I believe that before the end of this century England will have added to the other services which she has rendered to India the noble gift of a true beginning of representative government.

In regard to the request of the educated classes in the British provinces to be allowed a larger share in Indian legislation, as in regard to the desire of the Feudatory Princes to be allowed to take a larger part in the defence of the Empire, the Government has found itself able to go a certain length, but only a certain length. We shall presently see that the same result has been arrived at with reference to the demands of the party of social reform in India. Neither the Feudatory chiefs, nor the yearly political Congress, nor the child-marriage reformers have received all they asked for ; but the Government has found it possible to make an advance, or to offer to make an

advance, in each of the directions desired. The special value of Mr. Bradlaugh's proposed Bill is that it will indicate the exact difference in the length which the Government may be willing to go, compared with the length which the Indian National Congress asks it to go. For Mr. Bradlaugh takes the text of Lord Cross's Bill of last session, and only alters it so far as to show how it would stand if Lord Cross's Bill had gone into committee, and if all the amendments which Mr. Bradlaugh had made to it had been carried.

Mr. Bradlaugh's new Bill leaves the working out of the elective principle to the Indian Government acting under the control of Parliament. But it goes on to provide that the Indian Government shall accomplish this task within a period of eighteen months. Again, Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill fixes the exact number of the members for the various Councils, and fixes them on a larger scale than the Government will probably listen to. Thus Mr. Bradlaugh would fix the number of additional members of the Governor-General's Council at not less than forty, nor more than sixty. So far as one can infer from Lord Cross's measure of last session the Viceroy's Council, on its new constitution, would consist of from twenty to thirty members, and not from forty to sixty, as Mr. Bradlaugh proposes. There are a number of other differences between Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill and the one introduced last session by Lord Cross—differences which, in the aggregate, would materially alter the framework of the Indian constitution as designed by Lord Cross's measure. But when all is said, these differences are differences in degree rather than in principle, and in each case a plain issue is placed before Parliament as to the rate of advance which it may deem safe alike in the interests of India and of England—an issue which Parliament is well qualified to decide.

The new awakening of the Indian intellect and conscience is not only making itself felt in the political aspirations of India, but is working a social and domestic revolution in the homes of the people. We sometimes hear those who are opposed to political gatherings in India advising the political leaders to mind their own business, and to look into the institutions of their own family life. Now, this is precisely what the leaders of Indian thought are doing. For, as at the Revival of

Learning in Europe, so at all times and in all lands, a great human movement advances not in one, but in many directions. In India we see it take an industrial direction, we see it take an intellectual direction, we see it take a political direction, we see it take a religious direction, we see it rush into a hundred social and domestic channels. You cannot let loose the mighty waters of knowledge, and then command them to flow only in one narrow course. We have thrown open the floodgates of a new moral and intellectual life in India. The result is a new energy which is making itself felt in every department of human effort in India.

In economics, it is developing the old industrial system of India, which was conducted by household manufactures, into a system of production on a great scale. For the old basis of production by the family, or the unit, it is substituting the modern organization of labour and capital. The Indian artisans are ceasing to weave each at his own loom in his own cottage, and are working by thousands in steam-mills and factories. In religious life, it is profoundly modifying ancient superstitions, and giving birth to new spiritual movements, some of which may yet be destined to compare with the Protestant Reformation in Europe. In intellectual life, it is creating written languages out of what were down to our own day only spoken dialects; it is producing a vast new literature, issuing six thousand printed books each year, and circulating daily and weekly a powerful newspaper press.

The new political activity in India of which we hear so much is only one of the many aspects of this great awakening of the Indian races. It is as impossible to arrest that new political activity as it would be impossible to arrest the new industrial activity, and to put a stop to the jute mills and cotton factories in Calcutta and Bombay. To accomplish these feats we should first have to arrest the new educational activity, and shut up the 133,000 colleges and schools.

I propose to show how this new activity is affecting the inner household life of India—very briefly, on this occasion, for it is a subject on which I have written so much that I can scarcely hope to do so again without repeating myself. The rising generation of young men are becoming imbued with our Western ideas as

to the true position of woman. They desire wives who will be helpmates to them, capable of understanding their aims and of sharing their thoughts. The remedy at first seems simple. The system of public instruction established by the British Government in India provides as liberally for the education of girls as of boys. The girls' schools are open to all who choose to go, and at fees so moderate as to bring them within the reach of all. As a matter of fact, the Indian girls do go to school in considerable numbers, and in no department of public instruction has the proportionate rate of increase been so rapid as in female education. But the remedy is by no means so simple as it looks. For there are two influences at work in India which hamper and curtail the progress of female education. The first is a deep-seated prejudice against girls going out from the seclusion of their homes after the early years of childhood. Until the establishment of British rule this feeling was no prejudice at all, and but a very well-founded conviction of the dangers which lay in wait for female honour in a despotic and badly governed country.

Another obstacle to female education in India is early marriage. The first duty of an Indian father is to secure a provision for his daughters, and in Eastern countries that provision has almost always taken the shape of an early marriage. The great majority of Indian girls of respectable position are accordingly married before they are eleven years of age. Practically speaking, the school education of Indian girls comes to an end between the age of ten and eleven—that is to say, just at the age when the real school education of English girls begins. This is a very serious obstacle to elevating the position of women in India. But it is an obstacle which many earnest reformers in India are trying to overcome. A great native movement is taking place to persuade Indian public opinion against early marriages. The evils of such marriages, physical, moral, and intellectual, are being powerfully insisted on by native writers in hundreds of publications, and eloquently denounced by native speakers on scores of platforms. Associations are being formed in which the members bind themselves under penalties not to give their daughters in marriage or to allow their sons to marry wives under the age of sixteen. The



wealthier classes to some extent get rid of the difficulty by retaining aged Brahman teachers to instruct their daughters and girl-relatives in their own homes. But it is gradually, although slowly, being accepted by the native leaders of thought that female education in India will not be possible on an adequate scale until the prejudice against girls going out to school dies away, and until very early marriages are discountenanced by native public opinion. A Social Conference with this and similar objects is now held yearly during the session of the Indian National Congress, and is largely made up of its members. But the two bodies having different ends in view, the one political and the other social, wisely maintain their organization separate, and do not interfere with each other's work.

Side by side with the advance of female education, a movement is taking place to mitigate the harsh restrictions laid upon Hindu widows. The whole structure of Hindu society is arranged to give every woman one chance in life. As a matter of fact, every Hindu girl of respectable position gets married, and the failure of a father to secure a husband for his daughter would be considered not only dishonourable to himself, but a crime against religion. In order, however, that every girl shall be sure of marriage, it seems expedient to Hindu society that no woman shall have two husbands.

Apart from the strong religious views of the Hindus as to the propriety of a celibate life for widows, a view which Saint Paul enforces in his Epistle to Timothy, the custom of prohibiting widows to re-marry had a practical basis of social expediency in India. For in India, under native rule, male life was subjected to many risks, and there was a constant tendency to disproportionately large numbers of females. A state of almost constant war, or invasion, or tumult, means a steady drain on the manhood of a people. As a matter of fact, the provision of a married home for the daughters of respectable families was an even greater difficulty during the rough mediæval ages in India than it was in Europe. For the difficulty in Europe was to some extent met by convents, nunneries, and various sisterhoods. Mediæval India, after the political expulsion of Buddhism, had not these devices on any

adequate scale for providing for its surplus women. It accordingly placed harsher checks on their disproportionate numbers by female infanticide, by the prohibition of widow re-marriage, and by the voluntary burning of widows of certain of the higher castes upon their husband's funeral pile. The British Government, in putting an end to the wars and tumults which formed a constant drain on male life in India, also put an end to the female infanticide and the voluntary widow-burning, which tended to keep down the surplus of female life. The growth of the two sexes was allowed to follow its natural laws, with the natural tendency towards an equilibrium. The census of 1881 showed that the male population is now in excess of the female population of British India, in the proportion of 101 men to 97 women. An important survival of the old system remains, however, in the strong public sentiment that every girl should be married; but that, having been once married, if her husband dies, she should not marry again.

A large and enlightened section of the Indian community is now asking Government to remove by legislation the restrictions thus imposed by custom on the re-marriage of Hindu widows. They point out that the practice of child-marriage leaves at the age of fourteen or fifteen large numbers of Hindu child-widows, and that there are over two million of young widows in India to whom enforced celibacy is an injustice and a wrong. The evil is cruelly intensified by the custom of child-marriage, and by the multitude of child-widows who are left without having been really wives at all. The reformers accordingly ask Government to do one of two things: either to refuse to recognise child-marriage as binding—that is to say, to treat the religious marriage ceremony of the Hindus as merely a betrothal; or by law to remove all restrictions placed by custom on the re-marriage of widows.

The Government finds it impossible to accede to either of these apparently reasonable requests. For the British Government, when it took over India from the native dynasties, repeatedly assured the people that it would not interfere with their family customs; and these solemn assurances helped to procure the acquiescence of the native races in our rule. Now

the most imperative custom of Hindu family life is that every Hindu girl shall be married, and one of the most deeply rooted convictions of the great majority of Hindus is the necessity of very early marriages in order to secure this end. The necessity is not one of expediency alone, but a solemn obligation imposed on parents by the Hindu religion. The Government cannot, therefore, interfere without breaking its promise to the people. But it can show its sympathy with the movement of the educated classes against child-marriage; and it can let it be known that it is willing to legislate as soon as it can do so with the support of the Hindu community.

The other proposal of the social reformers is for Government to legislate in favour of the re-marriage of widows. This also is not so simple as it seems at first sight. For if the Hindu law attaches severe restraints to the position of a widow, it also grants her important privileges. According to Hindu law, the widow has always a right to be maintained by her husband's family. Among the poorer working Hindus, a widow forms a recognised charge on the labour of the male members of the household. In well-off Hindu families, if the husband leaves no son, the widow succeeds as a matter of right, not by favour or by testament, to her husband's property. In some parts of India she takes all his movable wealth as her own, and has a life interest in his landed estate. In other parts of India she has only a life interest in both his real and personal property. But in all parts she succeeds to very substantial legal advantages as a widow, because the law regards her as continuing the religious *persona* of her deceased husband in this world, and as ministering to his soul's welfare in the next by her round of pious ceremonies, her prayers, and self-denying life. If she marries again, she gives up her religious status of widow, and therefore has no claim to carry away into her new husband's family the property to which she succeeded for the express purpose of benefiting her late husband's soul by the ceremonies, prayers, and self-denials of Hindu widowhood.

The British Government has tried to cut the knot by a law allowing every Hindu widow to re-marry if she pleases, but attaching to her re-marriage the condition that she shall give up to her late husband's family the usufruct which she had

inherited from him to maintain her religious status as his widow. The reforming Indian party now ask that this unpleasant condition shall be abolished in whole or in part, and that Hindu widows may be allowed to re-marry without giving up their late husband's property. The British Government can only answer that if the reformers will persuade the majority of their countrymen of the expediency of the change, the Government will be ready to legislate in the manner proposed. But, as a matter of fact, Hindu public opinion is at present opposed to such a change.

The net result is that the Government does not find it possible to at once accede to either of the demands of the social reformers, whether in regard to placing restrictions upon child-marriage or in regard to removing the restrictions on the re-marriage of Hindu widows. Yet it has been able to do something towards social reform. It declines to interfere with the religious marriage of the Hindus, and it refuses to declare such marriages (in however early childhood the marriage may be contracted) as inoperative. It respects the religious marriage ceremony among the Hindus as a valid and binding act of marriage. It refuses to treat that ceremony as a mere betrothal, as some of the social reformers suggest, or to allow a right of repudiation to the boy and girl before the marriage is actually consummated. But it is about to pass a law which will practically defer the consummation of marriages in India until the child-bride reaches the age of twelve. It will thus, indirectly, aid in extending the unmarried years of girl-life in India, but extending them only to the age of twelve. This may seem a small advance. But it is an advance in the right direction, and the opposition which has already developed among the orthodox Hindus proves how necessary is the caution which has been observed by the British Government.

The truth is that to whatever form of Indian aspiration we turn the same result is disclosed. While the Feudatory Princes of India have made large offerings to the British Government of money and men and transport animals, to aid in the defence of the Indian Empire, the Government has only accepted a small imperial contingent of troops or transport from each State that desires to maintain one. In like manner, while

the Indian Congress, which represents the political movement among our own subjects, asks for a large expansion of the Legislative Councils, and a widespread introduction of the elective principle and of representative government, Her Majesty's Ministers, while willing to go as far in these directions as they think safe, do not find it possible to go so far as the more advanced of the Indian political reformers desire. The social reformers complain of the same incompleteness in the Government response to their requests for improvements in the marriage system of the Hindus. In each of these three departments of Indian activity—Feudatory, political, and social—the British Government finds itself unable to fully satisfy the aspirations of the more advanced reformers.

The important fact is that such aspirations have for the first time sprung into existence in India, and that they have found a loyal expression. Last year the leading Indian social reformer, Mr. Malabari, came to England to plead his cause. A strong deputation of Indian political reformers also spent several months in this country in explaining their wants. The telegraph announced a few weeks ago that the Indian National Congress is again going to appeal to the British nation during the present year. It is said to have appointed no fewer than one hundred delegates to come to England and state their case on British platforms. Such a spectacle must, I think, stir the hearts of us all. It may not be possible for the British Government to grant all that the Indian political reformers desire in the way of political progress, just as it has not been found possible to grant all that the Indian social reformers desire in legislative restrictions upon child-marriage. Yet the fact of such a deputation coming to us from India forms a splendid recognition of Britain's position as the mother-country of her great Empire throughout the world. It makes us realise not only the solidarity which is growing up between India and Britain, but also the confidence which the Indians themselves feel that they can lay their requirements before the British people, with the certainty of a fair hearing and of a fair consideration of their wants. The sight of the Indian troops hurrying to the aid of the Queen's armies in the Mediterranean and in Egypt taught the military nations of Europe a lesson

as to the power and resources of Greater Britain. But the present project of a hundred delegates coming from India to explain their political needs to Englishmen strikes me as a far more imposing spectacle. For it tells the world in unmistakable language that India herself believes in the justice of England, and in the determination of the British nation to do what is right by the Asiatic Empire which Providence has committed to their care.

### III

## THE RUIN OF AURANGZEB ; OR THE HISTORY OF A REACTION <sup>1</sup>

WHEN Dr. Johnson wanted a modern example of 'The Vanity of Human Wishes' he took the career of the Royal Swede. But during the same period that witnessed the brief glories of Charles XII. in Europe a more appalling tragedy of wrecked ambition was being enacted in the East. Within a year of Charles's birth in 1681, Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals, set out with his grand army for Southern India. Within a year of Charles's fatal march to Russia in 1708, Aurangzeb's grand army lay shattered by a quarter of a century of victory and defeat ; Aurangzeb himself was dying of old age and a broken heart ; while his enemies feasted around his starving camp, and prayed heaven for long life to a sovereign in whose obstinacy and despair they placed the firmest hopes. The Indian emperor and the Swedish king were alike men of severe simplicity of life, of the highest personal courage, and of indomitable will. The memory of both is stained by great crimes. History can never forget that Charles broke an ambassador on the wheel, and that Aurangzeb imprisoned his father and murdered his brethren.

But here the analogy ends. As the Indian emperor fought and conquered in a wider arena, so was his character laid out on grander lines, and his catastrophe came on a mightier scale. He knew how to turn back the torrent of defeat, by commanding his elephant's legs to be chained to the ground in the thick of the battle, with a swift yet deliberate valour which

<sup>1</sup> Published in the *Nineteenth Century*, May 1887.

Charles might have envied. He could spread the meshes of a homicidal intrigue, enjoying all the time the most lively consolations of religion; and he could pursue a State policy with a humane repugnance to the necessary crimes, yet with an inflexible assent to them, which Richelieu would have admired. From the meteoric transit of Charles XII. history learns little. The sturdy English satirist probably put that vain-glorious career to its highest purpose when he used it 'to point a moral, or adorn a tale.' From the ruin of Aurangzeb the downfall of the Mughal Empire dates, and the history of modern India begins.

The house of Timur had brought with it to India the adventurous hardihood of the steppes, and the unsapped vitality of the Tartar tent. Babar, the founder of the Indian Mughal Empire in 1526, was the sixth in descent from Timur, and during six more generations his own dynasty proved prolific of strongly marked types. Each succeeding emperor, from father to son, was, for evil or for good, a genuine original man. In Babar himself, literally The Lion, the Mughal dynasty had produced its epic hero; in Humayun, its knight-errant and royal refugee; in Akbar, its consolidator and statesman; in Jahangir, its talented drunkard; and its magnificent palace builder in Shah Jahan. It was now to bring forth in Aurangzeb a ruler whom hostile writers stigmatize as a cold-hearted usurper, and whom Muhammadan historians venerate as a saint.

Aurangzeb was born on the night of November 4, 1618, and before he reached the age of ten, his father, Shah Jahan, had succeeded to the throne of his ancestors. His mother, The Exalted of the Palace, was the last of the great queens who shared and directed the fortunes of a Mughal Emperor. Married when just out of her teens, she bore thirteen children to her husband, and died in giving birth to a fourteenth. Her nineteen years of wedded life had been splendid but sorrowful. Of her children, eight died in infancy or childhood. Her bereaved husband raised to her, in sight of his palace, the most beautiful tomb in the world. It crowns the lofty bank of the Jumna, a dream in marble, with its cupolas floating upwards like silver bubbles into the sky. To this



day it bears her Persian title, *The Exalted of the Palace*: a title which travellers from many far countries have contracted into the *Taj Mahal*.

She left behind her four sons and two daughters. Her eldest surviving child was the *Princess Imperial*, named *The Ornament of the World*: a masterful but affectionate girl of seventeen, and not free from feminine frailties. The *Princess Imperial* succeeded to her mother's place in her father's heart. During the remaining twenty-seven years of his reign she guided his policy and controlled his palace, and during his last eight years of dethronement and eclipse she shared his imprisonment. The great rest-house for travellers at Delhi was one of her many splendid charities. She died with the fame of her past beauty still fresh, unmarried, at the age of sixty-seven. Her grave lies close to a saint's and to a poet's, in that campo santo of marble latticework, and exquisite carving, and embroidered canopies of silk and gold, near the Hall of the sixty-four Pillars, beyond the Delhi walls. But only a piece of pure white marble, with a little grass piously watered by generations, marks the princess's grave. 'Let no rich canopy surmount my resting place,' was her dying injunction, inscribed on the headstone. 'This grass is the best covering for the grave of a lowly heart, the humble and transitory Ornament of the World, the discipline of the holy Man of Christ, the daughter of the Emperor Shah Jahan.' But the magnificent mosque of Agra is the public memorial of the lady who lies in that modest grass-covered grave.

The eldest son of *The Exalted of the Palace*, and the heir apparent to the Empire, was *Prince Dara*. One year younger than the *Princess Imperial*, he became the object of her ardent affection through life. In the troubles that were to fall upon the family she devoted herself to his cause. *Dara* was an open-handed, high-spirited prince, contemptuous of advice, and destitute of self-control. He had a noble and dignified bearing, except when he lost his temper. At such moments he would burst out into a tornado of abuse, insulting and menacing the greatest generals and officers of State. The rigid observances of Islam, with its perpetual round of prayers and its long fasts, were distasteful to his nature. And he had all the rival

religions, Christian, Muhammadan, and Hindu, to choose from, in the Court and the seraglio. Dara leaned towards Christianity and Hinduism. While contemptuously continuing in externals a Muhammadan, he concocted for himself an easy and elegant faith from the alternate teaching of a Brahman philosopher and a French Jesuit. He shocked good Musalmans by keeping an establishment of learned Hindus to translate their infidel scriptures into Persian. He even wrote a book himself to reconcile the conflicting creeds.

His next brother Shuja was a more discreet young prince. Conciliatory to the nobles, courageous, and capable of forming well-laid plans, he might also have been able to execute them but for his love of pleasure. In the midst of critical affairs he would suddenly shut himself up with the ladies of his palace, and give days and nights to wine, and song, and dance; no Minister of State daring to disturb his revels. Like his elder brother, he too fell away from the orthodox Suni faith of the Indian Muhammadans. But Shuja's defection was due to deliberate policy. He adopted the Shia heresy of Persia with the hope of winning the Persian adventurers, then powerful at Court and in the army, to his side in the struggle which he foresaw must take place for the throne.

Next to him in the family came the princess named The Brilliant Lady; less beautiful and less talented than her elder sister, but equally ambitious, and fonder of gifts and of display. She attached herself to the cause of the third brother Aurangzeb, born fourteen months after herself. The youngest of the four brethren was Prince Murad, six years younger than Aurangzeb. Murad grew up a model Muhammadan knight; generous, polite, a despiser of intrigue, and devoted to war and the chase. He boasted that he had no secrets, and that he looked only to his sword to win his way to fortune. But as years passed on his shining qualities were tarnished by an increasing indulgence at the table, and the struggle for the throne found him still a brave soldier indeed, but also a glutton and a drunkard.

In the midst of this ambitious and voluptuous Imperial family, a very different character was silently being matured. Aurangzeb, the third brother, ardently devoted himself to study. In after-life he knew the Koran by heart, and his memory was

a storehouse of the literature, sacred and profane, of Islam. He had himself a facility for verse, and wrote a prose style at once easy and dignified, running up the complete literary gamut from pleasantry to pathos. His Persian Letters to his Sons, thrown off in the camp, or on the march, or from a sick bed, have charmed Indian readers during two centuries, and still sell in the Punjab bazaars. His poetic faculty he transmitted in a richer vein to his eldest daughter, whose verses survive under her *nom de plume* of The Incognita.

But in the case of Aurangzeb, poetry and literary grace merely formed the illuminated margin of a solid and sombre learning. His tutor, a man of the old scholastic philosophy, led him deep into the ethical and grammatical subtleties which still form the too exclusive basis of an orthodox Muhammadan education. His whole nature was filled with the stern religion of Islam. Its pure adoration of one unseen God, its calm pauses for personal prayer five times each day, its crowded celebrations of public worship, and those exaltations of the soul which spring from fasting and high-strained meditation, formed the realities of existence to the youthful Aurangzeb. The outer world in which he moved, with its pageants and pleasures, was merely an irksome intrusion on his inner life. We shall presently see him wishing to turn hermit. His eldest brother scornfully nicknamed him The Saint.

To a young Muhammadan prince of this devout temper the outer world was at that time full of sadness. The heroic soldiers of the early Empire, and their not less heroic wives, had given place to a vicious and delicate breed of grandees. The ancestors of Aurangzeb, who swooped down on India from the North, were ruddy men in boots. The courtiers among whom Aurangzeb grew up were pale persons in petticoats. Babar, the founder of the Empire, had swum every river which he met with during thirty years of campaigning, including the Indus and the other great channels of the Punjab, and the mighty Ganges herself twice during a ride of 160 miles in two days. The luxurious lords around the youthful Aurangzeb wore skirts made of innumerable folds of the finest white muslin, and went to war in palankeens. On a royal march, when not on duty with the Emperor, they were carried, says an eye-witness,

‘ stretched as on a bed, sleeping at ease till they reached their next tent, where they are sure to find an excellent dinner,’ a duplicate kitchen being sent on the night before.

A hereditary system of compromise with strange gods had eaten the heart out of the State religion. Aurangzeb’s great-grandfather, Akbar, deliberately accepted that system of compromise as the basis of the empire. Akbar discerned that all previous Muhammadan rulers of India had been crushed between two opposite forces, between fresh hordes of Musalman invaders from without and the dense hostile masses of the Hindu population within. He conceived the design of creating a really national empire in India, by enlisting the support of the native races. He married, and he compelled his family to marry, the daughters of Hindu princes. He abolished the Infidel Tax on the Hindu population. He threw open the highest offices in the State, and the highest commands in the army, to Hindu leaders of men.

The response made to this policy of conciliation forms the most instructive episode in Indian history. One Hindu general subdued for Akbar the great provinces of Bengal and Orissa ; and organized, as his finance minister, the revenue system of the Mughal Empire. Another Hindu general governed the Punjab. A third was hurried southwards two thousand miles from his command in Kabul to put down a Muhammadan rising in districts not far from Calcutta. A Brahman bard led an imperial division in the field, and was Akbar’s dearest friend, for whose death the Emperor twice went into mourning. While Hindu leaders thus commanded the armies and shaped the policy of the Empire, Hindu revenue officers formed the backbone of his administration, and the Hindu military races supplied the flower of its troops. It was on this political confederation of interests, Musalman and Hindu, that the Mughal Empire rested, so long as it endured.

Akbar had not, however, been content with a political confederation. He believed that if the Empire was to last, it must be based on a religious coalition of the Indian races. He accordingly constructed a State religion, catholic enough, as he thought, to be acceptable to all his subjects. Such a scheme of a universal religion had, during two hundred years, been the

dream of Hindu reformers and the text of wandering preachers throughout India. On the death of the Bengal saint of the fifteenth century, the Muhammadans and Hindus contended for his body. The saint suddenly appeared in their midst, and, commanding them to look under the shroud, vanished. This they did. But under the winding sheet they found only a heap of beautiful flowers, one half of which the Hindus burned with holy rites, while the other half was buried with pomp by the Musalmans. In Akbar's time many sacred places had become common shrines for the two faiths: the Musalmans venerating the same impression on the rocks as the footprint of their prophet which the Hindus revered as the footprint of their god.

Akbar, the great-grandfather of Aurangzeb, utilised this tendency towards religious coalition as an instrument of political union. He promulgated a State religion, called the Divine Faith, which combined the monotheism of Islam with the symbolic worship of Hinduism, and with something of the spirit of Christianity. He worshipped the sun as the most glorious visible type of the Deity; and he commanded the people to prostrate themselves before himself as the divine representative. The Muhammadan lawyers set their seal to a decision supporting his Majesty. The Muhammadan medical men discovered that the eating of beef, which Akbar had renounced as repugnant to Hindu sentiment, was hurtful to the human body. Poets glorified the new faith; learned men translated the Hindu scriptures and the Christian gospel; Roman priests exhibited the birth of Jesus in waxwork, and introduced the doctrine of the Trinity. The orthodox Muhammadan beard was shaved; the devout Muhammadan salutation was discontinued; the Muhammadan confession of faith disappeared from the coinage; the Muhammadan calendar gave place to the Hindu. At length, a formal declaration of apostasy was drawn up, renouncing the religion of Islam for the Divine Faith of the Emperor.

The Emperor was technically the elected head of the Muhammadan congregation, and God's vicegerent on earth. It was as if the Pope had called upon Christendom to renounce in set terms the religion of Christ. A Persian historian declares

that when these 'effective letters of damnation,' as he calls them, issued, 'the heavens might have rent asunder and the earth opened her abyss.' As a matter of fact, Akbar was a fairly successful religious founder. One or two grave men retired from his Court, and a local insurrection was easily quelled. But Akbar had no apostolic successor. His son, the talented drunkard, while he continued to exact the prostrations of the people, revived the externals of Islam at Court, and restored the Muhammadan confession of faith to the coin. Akbar's grandson, the palace builder, abolished the prostrations. At the same time he cynically lent his countenance to the Hindu worship, took toll on its ceremonies, and paid a yearly allowance to the Hindu high-priest at Benares.

But neither the son nor the grandson of Akbar could stem the tide of immorality which rolled on, with an ever-increasing volume, during three generations of contemptuous half-belief. One of Akbar's younger sons had drunk himself to death, smuggling in his liquor in the barrel of his fowling-piece when his supply of wine was cut off. The quarter of Delhi known as Shaitanpara, or Devilville, dates from Akbar's reign. The tide of immorality brought with it the lees of superstition. Witches, wizards, diviners, professors of palmistry, and miracle workers thronged the capital. 'Here,' says a French physician at the Mughal Court, 'they tell a poor person his fortune for a halfpenny.' A Portuguese outlaw sat as wisely on his bit of carpet as the rest, practising astrology by means of an old mariner's compass and a couple of Romish prayer-books, whose pictured saints and virgins he used for the signs of the zodiac.

It was on such a world of immorality, superstition, and unbelief that the austere young Aurangzeb looked out with sad eyes. His silent reflections on the prosperous apostates around him must have been a sombre monotone, perhaps with ominous passages in it, like that fierce refrain which breaks in upon the Easter evening psalm, 'But in the name of the Lord, I will destroy them.' A young prince in this mood was a rebuke to the palace, and might become a danger to the throne. No one could doubt his courage; indeed he had slain a lion set free from the intervening nets usually employed in the royal chase. At the age of seventeen his father accordingly sent him to

govern Southern India, where the Hindu Marathas and two independent Muhammadan kingdoms professing the Shia heresy might afford ample scope for his piety and valour.

The imperial army of the south, under his auspices, took many forts, and for a time effected a settlement of the country. But after eight years of viceregal splendour, Aurangzeb, at the age of twenty-five, resolved to quit the world, and to pass the rest of his life in seclusion and prayer. His father angrily put a stop to this project; recalled him to Court, stripped him of his military rank, and deprived him of his personal estate. But next year it was found expedient to employ Aurangzeb in the government of another province; and two years later he received the great military command of Balkh. On his arrival, the enemy swarmed like locusts upon his camp. The attempt to beat them off lasted till the hour of evening prayer; when Aurangzeb, calmly dismounting from his horse, kneeled down in the midst of the battle and repeated the sacred ritual. The opposing general, awed by the religious confidence of the prince, called off his troops, saying 'that to fight with such a man is to destroy oneself.' After about seven years of wars and sieges in Afghanistan, Aurangzeb was again appointed Viceroy of Southern India.

In 1657 his eldest brother, firmly planted in the Imperial Court, and watching with impatient eyes the failing health of the Emperor, determined to disarm his brethren. He procured orders to recall his youngest brother Murad from his viceroyalty on the western coast; and to strip Aurangzeb of his power in the south. These mandates found Aurangzeb besieging one of the two heretical Muhammadan capitals of Southern India. Several of the great nobles at once deserted him. He patched up a truce with the beleaguered city, and extorted a large sum of money from its boy-king. He had previously squeezed a great treasure from the other independent Muhammadan kingdom of the south. Thus armed, at the cost of the Shia heretics, with the sinews of war, he marched north to deliver his father, the Emperor, from the evil counsels of the Prince Imperial.

For the Emperor, now sixty-seven years of age, lay stricken with a terrible disease. The poor old palace-builder well knew

the two essential conditions for retaining the Mughal throne—namely, to be perfectly pitiless to his kindred and to be in perfect health himself. In the early days of the Empire, the royal family had been knit together in bands of warm affection; and its chivalrous founder had given his own life for his son's. Babar, runs the story, seeing his son sinking under a mortal disease, walked three times solemnly round the bed, and implored God to take his own life and spare the prince. After a few moments of silent prayer, he suddenly exclaimed, 'I have borne it away; I have borne it away!' and from that moment his son began to recover, while the Lion Babar visibly declined. But during three generations the Mughal dynasty had lain under the curse of bad sons. Aurangzeb's father, the stricken Emperor, had been a rebel prince. He left not one male alive of the house of Timur, so that he and his children might be the sole heirs of the Empire. These children were now to prove his perdition. Amid the pangs of his excruciating disease, his eldest son Dara grasped the central government; while his next son, Prince Shuja, hurried north from his Viceroyalty of Bengal to seize the imperial capital.

Prince Shuja was driven back. But there was a son advancing from the south whose steps could not be stayed. Aurangzeb had been forced by his eldest brother's intrigues to assume the defensive. It seems doubtful whether, at first, he aspired to the throne. His sole desire, he declared, was to rescue his father from evil counsellors and then to retire from the world. This longing for the religious life had led to his public degradation when a young prince: it asserted itself amid the splendours of his subsequent reign. At the present crisis it served him for a mask: as to whether it was genuine, his previous and later life perhaps entitle him to the benefit of a doubt. On one point he had firmly made up his mind: that the apostasy of his two elder brothers disqualified them for a Muhammadan throne. He accordingly resolved to join his youngest brother, whose viceroyalty lay on his way north; and who, although a drunkard in private life, was orthodox in his public belief.

A five years' war of succession followed. Each one of the four brethren knew that the stake for which he played was an



empire or a grave. The eldest brother, Dara, defeated by Aurangzeb and betrayed into his hands, was condemned by the doctors of the law for his apostasy to Islam, and put to death as a renegade. The second brother, Shuja, was hunted out of his viceroyalty of Bengal into the swamps of Arakan, and outraged by the barbarian king with whom he had sought shelter. The last authentic glimpse we get of him is flying across a mountain into the woods, wounded on the head with a stone, and with only one faithful woman and three followers to share his end. The destiny of the youngest brother, Murad, with whom Aurangzeb had joined his forces, for some time hung in the balance. The tenderness with which Aurangzeb, on a memorable occasion, wiped the sweat and dust from his brother's face was probably not altogether assumed. But the more Aurangzeb saw of the private habits of the young prince, the less worthy he seemed of the throne. At last, one night, Murad awoke from a drunken sleep to find himself Aurangzeb's prisoner. His friends planned his escape; and he would have safely let himself down from the fortress, but for an alarm caused by the weeping of a lady who had shared his confinement and from whom he could not part without saying farewell. He was not allowed another chance. Aurangzeb had him tried—nominally for an old murder which he had committed when Viceroy—and executed. Having thus disposed of his three brothers, Aurangzeb got rid of their sons by slow poisoning with laudanum, and shut up his aged father in his palace till he died.

Then was let loose on India that tremendously destructive force, a puritan Muhammadan monarch. In 1658, in the same summer that witnessed the death of the puritan Protector of England, Aurangzeb, at the age of forty, seated himself on the throne of the Mughals. The narrative of his long reign of half a century is the history of a great reaction against the religious compromises of his predecessors, and against their policy of conciliation towards the native races. He set before himself three tasks: he resolved to reform the morals of the Court; to bring down the Hindus to their proper place as infidels; and to crush the two heretical Muhammadan kingdoms of Southern India.

The luxurious lords soon found that they had got a very different master from the old palace builder. Aurangzeb was an austere compound of the emperor, the soldier, and the saint; and he imposed a like austerity on all around him. Of a humble silent demeanour, with a profound resignation to God's will in the height of success as in the depths of disaster, very plainly clothed, never sitting on a raised seat in private, nor using any vessel of silver or gold, he earned his daily food by manual labour. But he doubled the royal charities, and established free eating-houses for the sick and poor. Twice each day he took his seat in court to dispense justice. On Fridays he conducted the prayers of the common people in the great mosque. During the month of fast, he spent six to nine hours a night in reading the Koran to a select assembly of the faithful. He completed, when Emperor, the task which he had begun as a boy, of learning the sacred book by heart; and he presented two copies of it to Mecca, beautifully written with his own hand. He maintained a body of learned men to compile a code of the Muhammadan law, at a cost exceeding 20,000*l.* sterling.

The players and minstrels were silenced by royal proclamation. But they were settled on grants of land, if they would turn to a better life. The courtiers suddenly became men of prayer; the ladies of the seraglio took enthusiastically to reciting the Koran. Only the poor dancers and singers made a struggle. They carried a bier with wailing under the window of the Emperor. On his Majesty's looking out and asking the purport of the funeral procession, they answered that 'Music was dead, and that they were bearing forth her corpse.' 'Pray bury her deeply,' replied the Emperor from the balcony, 'so that henceforth she may make no more noise.'

The measures taken against the Hindus seemed for a time to promise equal success. Aurangzeb at once stopped the allowance to the Hindu high-priest at Benares. Some of the most sacred Hindu temples he levelled with the ground, erecting magnificent mosques out of their materials on the same sites. He personally took part in the work of proselytism. 'His Majesty,' says a Persian biographer, 'himself teaches the holy confession to numerous infidels, and invests them with dresses

of honour and other favours.' He finally restored the Muhamadan Calendar. He refused to receive offerings at the Hindu festivals, and he sacrificed a large revenue from Hindu shrines. He remitted eighty taxes on trade and religion, at a yearly loss of several millions sterling. The goods of the true believers, indeed, were for some time altogether exempted from duties; and were eventually charged only one-half the rate paid by the Hindus.

These remissions of revenue compelled Aurangzeb to resort to new taxation. When his ministers remonstrated against giving up the Hindu pilgrim tax, he sternly declined to share the profits of idolatry and proposed a general tax on the infidels instead. That hated impost had been abolished by Akbar in the previous century—as part of his policy of conciliation towards the Hindus. Aurangzeb revived the poll-tax on infidels, in spite of the clamours of the Hindu population. They rent the air with lamentations under the palace windows. When he went forth in state on Friday, to lead the prayers of the faithful in the great mosque, he found the streets choked with petitioners. The Emperor paused for a moment for the suppliant crowd to open; then he commanded his elephants to advance, trampling the wretched people under foot. The detested impost was unsparingly enforced. If a Hindu of rank, writes a Persian historian, met a menial of the tax-office, 'his countenance instantly changed.' So low were the native races brought that a proclamation issued forbidding any Hindu to ride in a palanquin, or on an Arab horse, without a licence from Government.

While Aurangzeb dealt thus hardly with the Hindu population, his hand fell heavily on the Hindu princes. He vindictively remembered that the Hindu Rajputs had nearly won the throne for his eldest brother, and that their most distinguished chief had dared to remonstrate with himself. 'If your Majesty,' wrote the brave Hindu Raja of Jodhpur, 'places any faith in books by distinction called divine, you will there be instructed that God is the God of all mankind, not the God of the Musalmans alone. In your temples to His name, the voice of prayer is raised; in a house of images, where a bell is shaken, He is still the object of worship.' Aurangzeb did not venture

to quarrel with this great military prince. He sought his friendship, and employed him in the highest and most dangerous posts. But on his death the Emperor tried to seize his infant sons. The chivalrous blood of the Rajputs boiled over at this outrage on the widow and the orphan. They rose in rebellion; one of Aurangzeb's own sons placed himself at their head, proclaimed himself Emperor, and marched against his father with 70,000 men. A bitter war of religion followed. Aurangzeb, whose cause for a time had seemed hopeless, spared not the Hindus. He burned their homesteads, cut down their fruit-trees, defiled their temples, and carried away cartloads of their gods to the capital. There he thrust the helpless images, with their faces downwards, below the steps of the great mosque, so that they should be hourly trampled under foot by the faithful. The Rajputs, on their side, despoiled the mosques, burned the Koran, and insulted the prayer-readers. The war ended in a sullen submission of the Hindus; but the Rajputs became thenceforth the destroyers, instead of the supporters, of the Mughal Empire.

Having thus brought low the infidel Hindus of the north, Aurangzeb turned his strength against the two heretical Muhammadan kingdoms of Southern India. The conquest of the south had been the dream of the Mughal dynasty. During four generations each Emperor had laboured, with more or less constancy, at the task. To the austere conscience of Aurangzeb it seemed not only an unalterable part of the imperial policy, but an imperative religious duty. It grew into the fixed idea of his life. The best years of his young manhood, from seventeen to forty, he had spent as Viceroy of the South, against the heretic Shia kingdoms and the infidel Marathas. When the Viceroy of the South became Emperor of India, he placed a son in charge of the war. During the first twenty-three years of his reign Aurangzeb directed the operations from his distant northern capital. But at the age of sixty-three he realised that, if he was ever to conquer the South, he must lead his armies in person. Accordingly, in 1681, he set forth, now a white-bearded man, from his capital, never to return. The remaining twenty-six years of his life he spent on the march,

or in the camp, until death released him, at the age of nearly ninety, from his long labour.

Already a great sense of isolation had chilled the Emperor's heart. 'The art of reigning,' he said, 'is so delicate, that a king's jealousy should be awakened by his very shadow.' His brothers and nephews had been slain, as a necessary condition of his accession to the throne. His own sons were now impatient of his long reign. One of them had openly rebelled; the conduct of another was so doubtful that the imperial guns had to be pointed against his division during a battle. The able Persian adventurers, who had formed the most trustworthy servants of the Empire, were discountenanced by Aurangzeb as Shia heretics. The Hindus had been alienated as infidels. But one mighty force still remained at his command. Never had the troops of the Empire been more regularly paid or better equipped, although at one time better disciplined. Aurangzeb knew that the army alone stood between him and the disloyalty of his sons, and between him and the hatred of the native races. He now resolved to hurl its whole weight against the two heretical Muhammadan kingdoms of Southern India.

The military array of the Empire consisted of a regular army of about 400,000 men, and a provincial militia estimated as high as 4,400,000. The militia was made up of irregular levies, uncertain in number, incapable of concentration, and whose services could only be relied on for a short period. The regular army consisted partly of contingents, whose commanders received grants of territory, or magnificent allowances for their support, partly of troops paid direct from the imperial treasury. The policy of Akbar had been to recruit from three mutually hostile classes—the Suni Muhammadans of the Empire, the Shia Muhammadans from beyond the north-western frontier, and the Hindu Rajputs. The Shia generals were conspicuous for their skill, the Rajput troops for their valour. On the eve of battle the Rajput warriors bade each other a cheerful farewell for ever; not without reason, as in one of Aurangzeb's actions only six hundred Rajputs survived out of eight thousand.

The strength of the army lay in its cavalry, 200,000 strong. The pay was high, a trooper with only one horse, says Bernier,

receiving not less than Rs. 25 (say 55 shillings) a month—a large sum in those days. Cavaliers with parties of four or more horses drew from 200*l.* to nearly 1,000*l.* sterling a year, while a commander of five thousand had an annual surplus of 15,000*l.* sterling, after defraying all expenses. The sons of the nobility often served as private troopers, and the path of promotion lay open to all. Originally a commander of cavalry was bound to maintain an equal number of infantry, one-fourth of them to be matchlockmen and the rest archers. But, as a matter of fact, the infantry were a despised force, consisting of 15,000 picked men around the king's person, and a rabble of 200,000 to 300,000 foot soldiers and camp-followers on the march. The matchlockmen squatted on the ground, resting their pieces on a wooden fork which they carried on their backs; 'terribly afraid,' says Bernier, 'of burning their eyelashes or long beards; and, above all, lest some *jin* or evil spirit should cause the musket to burst.' For every random shot which they fired under these disadvantages, the cavalry discharged three arrows with a good aim, at their ease. The pay of a matchlockman went as high as 4*4s.* a month.

The artillery consisted of a siege train, throwing balls up to 96 and 112 pounds; a strong force of field guns; 200 to 300 swivel guns on camels; and ornamental batteries of light guns, known as the stirrup artillery. The stirrup artillery on a royal march numbered 50 or 60 small brass pieces, mounted on painted carriages, each drawn by two horses, with a third horse led by an assistant driver as a relay. At one time many of the gunners had been Christians or Portuguese, drawing 22*l.* sterling per mensem. The monthly pay of a native artilleryman under Aurangzeb was about 70*s.* The importance of the artillery may be estimated from the fact that after a battle with one of his brothers Aurangzeb found 114 cannon left on the field. The army of Kandahar in 1651 carried with it 30,000 cannon-balls, 400,000 lbs. of gunpowder, and 14,000 rockets. The war elephants were even more important than the artillery. Experienced generals reckoned one good elephant equal to a regiment of 500 cavalry; or, if properly supported by matchlockmen, at double that number. Elephants cost from 10,000*l.* downwards; 500*l.* to 1,000*l.* being

a common price. Akbar kept 5,000 of these huge animals, 'in strength like a mountain, in courage and ferocity lions.' Under Aurangzeb, over 800 elephants were maintained in the royal stables, besides the large number employed on service and in the provinces.

A pitched battle commenced with a mutual cannonade. The guns were placed in front, sometimes linked together with chains of iron. Behind them were ranged the camel artillery with swivel guns, supported by the matchlockmen; the elephants were kept as much as possible out of the first fire; the cavalry poured in their arrows from either flank. The Emperor, on a lofty armour-plated elephant, towered conspicuous in the centre; princes of the blood or powerful chiefs commanded the right and left wings. But there was no proper staff to enable the Emperor to keep touch with the wings and the rear. After the cannonade had done its work of confusion, a tremendous cavalry charge took place; the horse and elephants being pushed on in front and from either flank to break the adverse line of guns. In the hand-to-hand onset that followed the centre division and each wing fought on its own account, and the commander-in-chief might consider himself fortunate if one of his wings did not go over to the enemy. If the Emperor descended from his elephant, even to pursue the beaten foe on horseback, his own troops might in a moment break away in panic, and the just won victory be turned into a defeat.

With all its disadvantages, the weight of this array was such that no power then in India could, in the long run, withstand it. Its weak point was not its order of battle, but the disorder of its march. There was no complete chain of subordination between the divisional commanders. A locust multitude of followers ate up the country for leagues on either side. The camp formed an immense city sometimes 5 miles in length, sometimes  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles in circumference. Dead beasts of burden poisoned the air. 'I could never,' writes Bernier, in words which his countryman Duplex turned into action a century later, 'see these soldiers, destitute of order, and moving with the irregularity of a herd of animals, without thinking how easily five and twenty thousand of our veterans from Flanders,

under Condé or Turenne, would destroy an Indian army, however vast.'

A Bundela officer in the grand army has left a journal of its operations, but without mentioning the total number of troops employed. Aurangzeb found two distinct powers in Southern India : first, the heretical Muhammadan kingdoms of Golconda and Bijapur ; second, the fighting Hindu peasantry, known as the Marathas. In the previous century, while Akbar was conciliating the Hindu Rajputs of the north, the independent Muhammadan sovereigns of the south had tried a like policy towards the Hindu Marathas, with less success. During a hundred years the Marathas had sometimes sided with the independent Muhammadan kingdoms against the imperial troops, sometimes with the imperial troops against the independent Muhammadan kingdoms ; exacting payment from both sides ; and gradually erecting themselves into a third party which held the balance of power in the south. After several years of fighting, Aurangzeb subdued the two Muhammadan kingdoms, and set himself to finally crush the Hindu Marathas. In 1690 their leader was captured ; but he scornfully rejected the Emperor's offer of pardon coupled with the condition of turning Musalman. His eyes were burned in their sockets with a red-hot iron, and the tongue which had blasphemed the Prophet was cut out. The skin of his head, stuffed with straw, was insultingly exposed throughout the cities of Southern India.

These and similar atrocities nerved with an inextinguishable hatred the whole Maratha race. The guerilla war of extermination which followed during the next seventeen years has scarcely a parallel in history. The Marathas first decoyed, then baffled, and finally slaughtered the imperial troops. The chivalrous Rajputs of the north had stood up against the shock of the grand army and had been broken by it. The Hindu peasant confederacy of the south employed a very different strategy. They had no idea of bidding farewell to each other on the eve of a battle, or of dying next day on a pitched field. They declined altogether to fight unless they were sure to win ; and their word for victory meant 'to plunder the enemy.' Their clouds of horsemen, scantily clad, with only a folded blanket for a saddle, rode jeeringly round the imperial cavalry swathed in



sword-proof wadding, or fainting under chain-armour, and with difficulty spurring their heavily caparisoned steeds out of a prancing amble. If the imperial cavalry charged in force, they charged into thin air. If they pursued in detachments, they were speared man by man.

In the Mughal army the foot-soldier was an object of contempt. The Maratha infantry were among the finest light troops in the world. Skilled marksmen, and so agile as almost always to be able to choose their own ground, they laughed at the heavy cavalry of the Empire. The Marathas camped at pleasure around the grand army, cutting off supplies, dashing in upon its line of march, plundering the ammunition waggons at river-crossings, and allowing the wearied imperialists no sleep by night attacks. If they did not pillage enough food from the royal convoys, every homestead was ready to furnish the millet and onions which was all they required. When encumbered with booty, or fatigued with fighting, they vanished into their hill forts; and next morning fresh swarms hung upon the imperial line of march. The tropical heats and rains added to the miseries of the northern troops. One autumn a river overflowed the royal camp at midnight, sweeping away ten thousand men, with countless tents, horses, and bullocks. The destruction only ceased when the aged Emperor wrote a prayer on paper with his own hand, and cast it into the rising waters.

During ten years Aurangzeb directed these disastrous operations, chiefly from a headquarters cantonment. But his headquarters had grown into an enormous assemblage, estimated by an Italian traveller at over a million persons. The Marathas were now plundering the imperial provinces to the north, and had blocked the line of communication with upper India. In 1698 the Emperor, lean, and stooping under the burden of eighty years, broke up his headquarters, and divided the remnants of his forces into two *corps d'armée*. One of them he sent under his best general to hold the Marathas in check in the open country. The other he led in person to besiege their cities and hill forts. The *corps d'armée* of the plains was beguiled into a fruitless chase from province to province; fighting nineteen battles in six months. It marched and counter-marched, writes the Bundela officer, 3,000 miles in one continuous campaign,

until the elephants, horses, and camels were utterly worn out.

The Emperor's *corps d'armée* fared even worse. Forty years before, in the struggle for the throne, he had shared the bread of the common soldiers, slept on the bare ground, or reconnoitred, almost unattended, several leagues in front. The youthful spirit flamed up afresh in the aged monarch. He marched his troops in the height of the rainy season. Many of the nobles, having lost their horses, had to trudge through the mire on foot. Fort after fort fell before his despairing onslaught; but each capture left his army more shattered and the forces of the enemy unimpaired. At last his so-called sieges dwindled into an attack on a fortified village of banditti, during which he was hemmed in within his own entrenchments. In 1703 the Marathas had surprised an imperial division on the banks of the Narbada, 21,000 strong, and massacred or driven it pell-mell into the river, before the troopers could even saddle their horses. In 1705 the imperial elephants were carried off from their pasture-ground outside the royal camp; the convoys from the north were intercepted; and grain rose to fivepence a pound in the army—a rate more than ten times the ordinary price, and scarcely reached even in the severest Indian famines when millions have died of starvation. The Marathas had before this begun to recover their forts. The Emperor collected the wreck of his army, and tried to negotiate a truce. But the insolent exultation of the enemy left him no hope. 'They plundered at pleasure,' says the Bundela officer, 'every province of the south;' 'not a single person durst venture out of the camp.'

In 1706, a quarter of a century since the grand army had set forth from the northern capital, the Emperor began to sink under the accumulation of disasters. While he was shut up within his camp in the far south, the Marathas had organized a regular system of extorting one-fourth of the imperial revenue from several of the provinces to the north. In the north-west the Hindu Rajputs were in arms. Still further north, the warlike Jat Hindu peasantry were up in revolt, near the capital. Aurangzeb had no one to quell this general rising of the Hindu races. The Muhammadan generals, who had served him so well during his prime of life, now perceived that the end

was near, and began to shift for themselves. Of his four surviving sons, he had imprisoned the eldest during six years ; and finally released him only after eleven years of restraint. The next and most favoured son so little trusted his father that, after one narrow escape, he never received a letter from the Emperor without turning pale. The third son had been during eighteen years a fugitive in Persia from his father's vengeance, wearying the Shah for an army with which to invade Hindustan. The fourth son had known what it was to be arrested on suspicion. The finances had sunk into such confusion that the Emperor did not dare to discuss them with his ministers. With one last effort, he retreated to Ahmadnagar ; the Marathas insulting the line of march, but standing aside to allow the litter of the Emperor to pass, in an awed silence.

The only escape left to the worn-out Emperor was to die. 'I came a stranger into the world,' he wrote to one of his sons a few days before the end, 'and a stranger I depart. I brought nothing with me, and, save my human infirmities, I carry nothing away. I have fears for my salvation, and of what torments may await me. Although I trust in God's mercy, yet terror will not quit me. But, come what may, I have launched my barque on the waves. Farewell, farewell, farewell!' The fingers of the dying monarch kept mechanically telling his beads till the last moment. He expired on February 21, 1707, in the 91st year of his age and the 51st of his reign according to the Muhammadan calendar, or two years less by our reckoning of time. 'Carry this creature of dust to the nearest burying-place,' he said, 'and lay it in the earth without any useless coffin.' His will restricted his funeral expenses to ten shillings, which he had saved from the sale of work done with his own hands. Ninety odd pounds that he had earned by copying the Koran, he left to the poor. His followers buried him beside the tomb of a famous saint, near the deserted capital of Daulatabad.

Never since the Assyrian summer night when the Roman Emperor Julian lay dying of the javelin wound in his side had an imperial policy of reaction ended in so complete a catastrophe. The Roman Empire was destined to centuries of further suffering before it passed through death into new forms of life.

The history of Aurangzeb's successors is a swifter record of ruin. The Hindu military races closed in upon the Mughal Empire ; its Muhammadan viceroys carved out for themselves independent kingdoms from its dismembered provinces. A series of puppet monarchs were set up and pulled down ; seven devastating hosts poured into India through the northern passes ; a new set of invaders who would take no denial landed from the sea. Less than a century after Aurangzeb's death, Lord Lake, on his entry into Delhi, was shown a feeble old captive of the Hindu Marathas, blinded, poverty-stricken, and half imbecile, sitting upon a tattered canopy, whom he compassionately saluted as the Mughal Emperor. A new rule succeeded in India ; a rule under which the too rapid reforms of Akbar, and the too obstinate reaction of Aurangzeb, are alike impossible.

Periods of progress have alternated with periods of pause. But the advance has been steady towards that consciousness of solidarity, that enlightenment of the masses, and that capacity for political rights, which mark the growth of a nation. It was by the alienation of the native races that the Mughal Empire perished ; it is by the incorporation of those races into a loyal and a united people that the British rule will endure.

And ye, that read these Ruines Tragicall,  
Learne, by their losse, to love the low degree ;  
And, if that Fortune chaunce you up to call  
To Honour's seat, forget not what you be :  
For he, that of himself is most secure,  
Shall finde his state most fickle and unsure.

## IV

# ENGLAND'S WORK IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>

## *THE WORK DONE*

### I

#### PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY

BRITISH rule in India is again upon its trial. On the one hand, the Government finds itself face to face with problems which, on a much smaller scale in Ireland, are the despair of our wisest statesmen. On the other hand, doubters have arisen who dispute whether our supremacy in the East is a gain either to ourselves or to the peoples over whom we rule. The question as to the benefit of our Indian connection to ourselves is a rhetorical rather than a serious one. For with the downfall of British rule in India would disappear that security of person and property which forms the first essential for our commerce with the East. I, for one, am not afraid of the cry of 'Perish India!' when I remember that that cry means, Perish the greatest customer of England in all the world; perish its chief market for Manchester goods; perish 50 millions sterling of British trade per annum. What we have reason to fear is not the cry of 'Perish India!' but the murmur against the responsibilities which our rule in India involves.

If, however, as some have recently alleged, that rule has failed to benefit the Indian races, then I can sympathize with those who question whether we should extend the responsibili-

<sup>1</sup> Lectures delivered at the Philosophical Institution in Edinburgh, 1879-80.

ties which Indian rule entails. For no government has a right to exist which does not exist in the interests of the governed. The test of British rule in India is, not what it has done for ourselves, but what it has done for the Indian people. By this test our work in the East must stand or fall. If our attempt to administer that vast and distant empire has turned out a failure; if its people are not more free, more secure, and more prosperous under British rule than they were under their native dynasties; then the wise course for Great Britain would seem to be to curtail her former responsibilities, to accept no new ones, and to withdraw as far as may be from an undertaking to which she had proved unequal.

If, on the other hand, we find that our countrymen have not failed in their splendid and difficult task; if we find that British rule in India means order in place of anarchy, protection by the law instead of oppression by the sword, and a vast free people dwelling in safety where of old each man was beaten down beneath whosoever was stronger than himself, then I think that Great Britain may with a firm heart continue to accept the great responsibility which has fallen to her, and that she may calmly face each new duty which that responsibility involves.

During the last ten years it has been my business to visit, almost every winter, the twelve provinces of India, and to superintend a survey of their population and resources. The Indian Government has, so to speak, ordered me to conduct for it a great stock-taking after a century of British rule. I have often amused myself, during my solitary peregrinations, by imagining what a Hindu of the last century would think of the present state of his country if he could revisit the earth. I have supposed that his first surprise at the outward physical changes had subsided; that he had got accustomed to the fact that thousands of square miles of jungle, which in his time were inhabited only by wild beasts, have been turned into fertile crop-lands; that fever-smitten swamps have been covered with healthy, well-drained cities; that the mountain walls which shut off the interior of India from the seaports have been pierced by roads and scaled by railways; that the great rivers which formed the barriers between provinces, and desolated the

country with their floods, have now been controlled to the uses of man, spanned by bridges, and tapped by canals. But what would strike him as more surprising than these outward changes is the security of the people. In provinces where every man, from the prince to the peasant, a hundred years ago, went armed, he would look round in vain for a matchlock or a sword. He would find the multitudinous native States of India, which he remembered in jealous isolation broken only by merciless wars, now trading quietly with each other, bound together by railways and roads, by the post and the telegraph. He would find, moreover, much that was new as well as much that was changed. He would see the country dotted with imposing edifices in a strange foreign architecture, of which he could not guess the uses. He would ask what wealthy prince had reared for himself that spacious palace? He would be answered that the building was no pleasure-house for the rich, but a hospital for the poor. He would inquire, In honour of what new deity is this splendid shrine? He would be told that it was no new temple to the gods, but a school for the people. Instead of bristling fortresses, he would see courts of justice; in place of a Muhammadan general in charge of each district, he would find an English magistrate; instead of a swarming soldiery, he would discover a police.

He would also detect some mournful features in the landscape. In provinces where, a hundred years ago, there was plenty of land for everyone who wished to till it, he would see human beings so densely crowded together as to exhaust the soil, and yet fail to wring from it enough to eat. Among a people whose sole means of subsistence was agriculture he would find a landless proletariat springing up, while millions more were clinging with a despairing grip to their half-acre of earth a-piece, under a burden of rack-rent or usury. On the one hand, he would see great bodies of traders and husbandmen living in a security and comfort unknown in the palmiest days of the Mughals. On the other hand, he would ask himself, as I have often asked myself, whether the prosperity of the prosperous is not highly paid for by the poverty of the poor, and whether this splendid fabric of British rule does not rest deep down on a harder struggle for life.

I shall endeavour to present a few scenes of the panorama which would thus pass before his eyes. There are all the signs at present of a new departure in our dealings with India, and it is of the utmost importance that the English nation should realise the actual facts. My desire is so to state these facts that they may be read and remembered by numbers of my countrymen. It will be in no vainglorious spirit that I contrast what has been with what is. In thinking of her work in India, Great Britain may proudly look back, but she must also look anxiously forward. If, in these preliminary pages, I dwell on what England has accomplished in India, it is only that I may clear the way for stating with the greater emphasis what England has yet to do for the Indian people.

Indian frontier affairs have lately occupied much attention, and I shall commence my sketch by a glance at the frontiers of India in the last century. India is a great three-cornered country, stretching southward from Asia into the sea. Its northern base rests upon the Himalayan ranges; the chief part of its western side is washed by the Indian Ocean, and of its eastern by the Bay of Bengal. But while thus guarded along the whole length of its boundaries by Nature's defences, the mountains and the sea, it has, at its north-eastern and north-western corners, two opposite sets of gateways which connect it with the rest of Asia. Through these gateways successive hordes of invaders have poured into India, and in the last century the process was still going on. Each set of new-comers plundered and massacred without mercy and without restraint. During 700 years the warring races of Central Asia and Afghanistan filled up their measure of bloodshed and pillage to the full. Sometimes they returned with their spoil to their mountains, leaving desolation behind; sometimes they killed off or drove out the former inhabitants, and settled down in India as lords of the soil; sometimes they founded imperial dynasties, destined to be crushed, each in its turn, by a new host swarming into India through the Afghan passes. In the middle of the last century, six such inroads on a great scale took place in twenty-three years. The first was led by a soldier of fortune from Persia, who slaughtered Afghan and Indian alike; the last five were regular Afghan invasions.



The precise meaning of the word 'invasion' in India during the last century may be gathered from the following facts. It signified not merely a host of twenty to a hundred thousand barbarians on the march, paying for nothing, and eating up every town, and cottage, and farmyard; burning and slaughtering on the slightest provocation, and often in mere sport. It usually also meant a grand final sack and massacre at the capital of the invaded country. Here is the account of the fate of Delhi in the first of the six invasions in the middle of the last century—an account drawn up by the least rhetorical and most philosophical of Indian historians, the father of John Stuart Mill. Delhi had peacefully opened its gates to the strangers, but a brawl had afterwards arisen between the troops and the citizens. 'With the first light of the morning,' the invading leader, 'Nadir, issued forth, and, dispersing bands of soldiers in every direction, ordered them to slaughter the inhabitants, without regard to age or sex, in every street or avenue in which the body of a murdered Persian should be found. From sunrise to midday the sabre raged; and by that time not less than 8,000 were numbered with the dead. During the massacre and pillage the city was set on fire in several places.' At the end of a fifty-eight days' sack, the plunderers went off with their booty, leaving the capital stripped, burned, and desolate.

On this first of the six invasions, then, 8,000 men, women, and children were hacked to pieces in one forenoon in the streets of the capital. But the Persian general knew how to stop the massacre at his pleasure. The Afghan leaders had less authority, and their five great invasions during the thirteen middle years of the last century form one of the most appalling tales of bloodshed and wanton cruelty ever inflicted on the human race. In one of these invasions, the miserable capital, Delhi, again opened her gates and received the Afghans as guests. Yet for several weeks, not merely for six hours on this occasion, the citizens were exposed to every foul enormity which a barbarian army could practise on a prostrate foe. Meanwhile the Afghan cavalry were scouring the country, slaying, burning, and mutilating in the meanest hamlet as in the greatest town. They took especial delight in sacking the holy places of the Hindus, and murdering the defenceless votaries at the shrines. For example,

one gang of 25,000 Afghan horsemen swooped down upon the sacred city of Muttra during a festival, while it was thronged with peaceful Hindu pilgrims engaged in their devotions. 'They burned the houses,' says the Tyrolese Jesuit Tieffenthaler, who was in India at that time, 'together with their inmates, slaughtering others with the sword and the lance; hauling off into captivity maidens and youths, men and women. In the temples they slaughtered cows,' the sacred animal of the Hindus, 'and smeared the images and pavement with the blood.'

It is needless to quote further from the tale of Afghan atrocities in the last century. They went on year after year, the Afghans being too loosely organized to serve as a barrier against the hosts from Central Asia, and always ready for an Indian invasion on their own account. The border-land between Afghanistan and India lay silent and waste; indeed, districts far within the frontier, which had once been densely inhabited, and which are now again thickly peopled, were swept bare of inhabitants. Thus Gurjanwala, the seat of the ancient capital of the Punjab in Buddhist times, was utterly depopulated. Its present inhabitants are immigrants of comparatively recent date. The district, which was thus stripped of its inhabitants in the last century, has now a new population of over half a million souls. The Afghan question survives to this day, but its present form, although by no means easy of solution, is preferable to the shape in which it presented itself in the last century.

In the last century, however, invasions and inroads were yearly events along the whole frontier of India. The Himalayan mountains, instead of serving as a northern wall to shut out aggressors, formed a line of fastnesses from which the hill races poured down upon the plains. For fifteen hundred miles along their base stretched a thick belt of territory which no one dared to cultivate. This silent border-land varied from twenty to fifty miles in breadth, and embraced a total area of 30,000 square miles, that yielded no food for man, but teemed with wild beasts, which nightly sallied forth to ravage the herds and hamlets in the open country beyond. Such a border-land seemed to the miserable villagers on the plains to be the best possible frontier; for its dense jungles served as some sort of

barrier against the invasions of the wild Himalayan races, and it bred deadly fevers which made havoc of armies that attempted a passage through it. Indeed, the ancient Hindu laws of Manu, written more than 2,000 years ago, ordained, as a protection to a royal city or kingdom, a belt of wilderness twenty miles around it in place of fortifications; and the peasantry of Northern India were thankful in the last century for the tract of disease-laden jungle which, to a certain extent, defended them from the savage hillmen beyond.

Such was the state of the north-western and the long northern boundary of India before the establishment of British rule. A glance at the north-eastern border discloses a still more painful picture. The history of the fertile valley of Assam, in the north-eastern corner of India, is one long narrative of invasion and extermination. Anciently the seat of a powerful Hindu kingdom, whose ruined forts of massive hewn stone we find buried in the jungle, Assam was devastated, like the rest of Eastern Bengal, by the fanatical Muhammadan invaders in the fifteenth century from the west. A fierce aboriginal race (the Koch) next swooped down on it from the north. They in turn were crushed by another aboriginal race (the Ahams) from the east; and these again were being exterminated by the Burmese from the south, when they implored the English to interfere. During the last century large tracts of Assam were depopulated, and throughout that province and Eastern Bengal 30,000 square miles of fertile frontier districts lay waste. In addition to these systematic invasions, the smaller hill tribes every autumn rushed down upon the miserable hamlets which were left and drove away the women and the cattle.

The great mountain wall round Northern India failed therefore, till the British came upon the scene, to afford any security to the Indian races. The sea, which forms the natural defence of the rest of the country, was in like manner only a source of new dangers. On the Bay of Bengal, the pirates from the Burmese coast sailed up the great rivers, burning the villages, massacring or carrying off into slavery the inhabitants. The first English surveyor, in the second half of the last century, entered on his maps a fertile and now populous tract of a thousand square miles on the sea-board, as bare of villages, with

the significant words written across it, 'Depopulated by the Maghs,' or sea-robbers. A fleet was ineffectually maintained by the Muhammadan Government to keep open the river channels, and a heavy impost, whose name survives to the present day, although the tax itself has long been abolished, was in vain levied for this service. On the other side of the peninsula, in the Indian Ocean, piracy was conducted on a grander scale. Wealthy rajas kept up luxurious Courts upon the extortions which their pirate fleets levied from trading vessels, and from the villages along the coast. The truth is that the natural defences of India, the mountains and the sea, were in the last century equally powerless to protect the Indian races.

This state of things could not be permitted under British rule, and the first business of the English was to secure India from foreign invasions. The sea robbers were effectively dealt with. One of Clive's achievements was rooting out the pirate nests of the south-western coast; and the Indian navy, after sweeping the robber hordes from the sea, and rendering Indian waters as safe as the English Channel, finished its work nineteen years ago, and was abolished in 1861. The unruly tribes of the Himalayan frontiers had always their hill fastnesses to retreat to. Their subjugation took a longer time, and is less complete, as our troubles with Afghanistan still attest. But by persuasion, and, when necessary, by chastisement, we have taught the wild races along the whole northern and north-eastern frontier, for a distance of 1,500 miles, the lesson that they must please keep quiet, and betake themselves to some other livelihood than the pillage of the husbandmen on the plains. Most of them have proved apt scholars. The great kingdom of Nepal on the north, which forced us to correct its inveterate practice of raiding by two campaigns, followed by partial annexation, has, for the last sixty years, been our firm ally, and hurried out its armies to our help in the Mutiny of 1857. At one time during this long interval the dynastic intrigues, always fermenting in a native Court, threatened to bring the Nepalese into conflict with the British; and on that occasion the whole kingdom of Nepal was kept loyal to its treaties, through a prolonged crisis, by the firmness and skill of a single Englishman, Brian Hodgson. Other native States, like the principality

of Kuch Behar, at once settled down into peaceful industry. Its first and only treaty with us, dated 1773, remains unbroken by either party to this day, a monument of mutual good faith.

A firm frontier being established in Northern India, the peasantry spread themselves out upon the unoccupied borderlands. The task of reclaiming these tracts has been a heavy one. In some parts, as in the now prosperous district of Goalpara with its half-million of inhabitants, more money was spent, until twenty-five years ago, by Government in rewards for killing the wild animals than the whole sum realised from the land revenue. This broad belt of waste land along the frontier was almost the only unoccupied territory which the British Government could grant to European settlers. The first British capitalists had to do battle alike with the banditti and the wild beasts. We read in the manuscript records of 1788 of a Mr. Raush, one of the earliest English merchants in Assam, who made an alliance on his own account with the local raja, and sent a private regiment of 700 men to the aid of that prince. While the natives of India have pushed their rice cultivation towards the foot of the mountains, English capitalists have dotted their slopes with tea plantations. Not less than 13,000 square miles of border districts have been reclaimed, and yield each year at the lowest estimate eighteen millions sterling worth of produce. The tea gardens alone exported last year three millions sterling worth of tea, chiefly to England.

The unsettled frontier of the last century meant that sixty thousand square miles of border-land (double the whole area of Scotland) were abandoned to jungle and the wild beasts, not because there were no people to cultivate the soil, but because they did not dare to do so. It signified that tracts which might have yielded, and which will yet yield, thirty millions sterling worth of food each year lay untilled through terror of the turbulent hill races. The security given by a century of British rule in these frontier districts means 13,000 square miles already brought under the plough, growing each year eighteen millions sterling worth of produce, or more than the average normal cost of the Indian army and the whole defence of the Indian Empire.

The task of freeing India from foreign invasion was, however, only the first of many heavy responsibilities which our acquisition of the country entailed. The dying throes of the Mughal Empire had let loose its disbanded or revolted armies upon the people. The troops, finding that their pay was no longer forthcoming from the Muhammadan treasury, lived by open pillage. In what are now the most peaceful and most populous districts of Bengal there were, in the last century, standing camps of banditti. Many of the principal native families, being ruined by the exactions of the Musalman tax-gatherers, betook themselves to plunder. They sheltered the banditti on their estates, levied black-mail from the surrounding villages as the price of immunity from depredation, and shared in the pillage of such as would not come to terms. Their country houses were robber strongholds, and the English judges of the last century have left it on record that a gang robbery never occurred without a landed proprietor being at the bottom of it.

Lawlessness breeds lawlessness, and the miserable peasants, stripped of their little hoards, were forced to become plunderers in their turn. Many 'husbandmen,' says an official report of 1771, 'who have hitherto borne the first of characters among their neighbours, pursue this last resource to procure themselves a subsistence.' The Council of Calcutta reported in 1772 that organized gangs of robbers were burning, plundering, and ravaging the interior districts of Bengal in bodies of 50,000 men. The English found no police in India to cope with this great evil. Each village had its watchman, but the village watchman would have been powerless against the robber gangs, and so he entered into league with them. For a time the East India Company's troops were constantly engaged against the banditti. In 1773 we hear of our Sepoys 'being totally defeated' by a robber horde, and 'their English leader with the whole party cut off.' But by degrees these vast armies of banditti were broken up, and scattered themselves over the country in smaller gangs.

Such lawlessness was the normal condition of all India for a full half-century, and in some provinces for many centuries, before the advent of British rule. A long succession of invaders during 700 years had crushed beneath them the preceding

racés. In many instances the previous inhabitants were driven from their fields altogether and forced to take refuge in the mountains or jungles. They then became what is called in India a 'depressed race,' or a 'predatory caste.' In every province we find one or more of these depressed or vanquished races, such as the Bhars of Oudh, the Bhils of Jalaun, the Gaulis of the Central Provinces, the Chandels and Bundelas of Bundelkhand, the Ahams of Assam, besides the numerous hill tribes scattered over the country. In the last century there were over a hundred hereditary 'predatory castes' or marauding hill and forest tribes in India, and many of their names survive to our days in the census of 1871; that is to say, there were more than one hundred resolute communities openly living from generation to generation by plunder.

Here, then, was a great organisation of the criminal classes, which had long existed, and which the English had to put down without the aid of any regular police. At first the Company's servants attempted to extirpate crime by copying the cruel criminal code of the Musalmans. Warren Hastings, for example, made a law that every convicted gang robber should be executed; that he should be executed in all the forms and terrors of the native law in his own village; that his whole family should be made slaves, and that every inhabitant of the village should be fined. The gang robbers retaliated by incendiarism on a great scale throughout the country. In 1780 they were believed to have caused a conflagration of Calcutta which burned down 15,000 houses. Nearly 200 people perished in the flames. 'Deduct,' saith the deed for the Benares District for the year 1782, 'deduct the devastations, &c., of two months' disturbances, *sicca* rupees 666,666,' or over 70,000*l*. 'A few nights ago,' says a Calcutta newspaper of 1780, 'four armed men entered the house of a Moorman, near Chowringhi,' the principal street, 'and carried off his daughter.' No native ever ventured out after dusk with a good shawl on; and it was the invariable practice, even in English mansions in Calcutta, for the porter to lock the outer door at the commencement of each meal, and not to open it again till the butler brought him word that the plate was safely shut up in its strong box. Clear cases of fire-raising are constantly recorded, and at length it was gravely recommended

‘that all those owning straw houses should have a long bamboo with three hooks at the end to catch the villains.’

All this has changed. Strange as it may sound, there is now less crime in India than in England. For each million persons in England and Wales there are about 870 criminals always in gaol. In India, where the police is very completely organized, there are only 614 prisoners in gaol for each million of the people. Moreover, in England and Wales there are 340 women in gaol for each million of the female population, while in India they have only twenty-eight women in gaol for each million of the female population. The petty offences, punished by a fine, are also less numerous in Bengal than in England, compared with the total number of inhabitants. These gaol returns are sometimes misleading, owing to differences in the class of punishment inflicted, but I have satisfied myself that the above figures substantially represent the facts. The use of troops against banditti is now a thing of the past. The existence of an army is less realised in a rural district of Bengal than in an English shire. Of the sixty-three millions of people in that province, probably forty millions go through life without ever seeing the face of a soldier.

A century of British rule has, therefore, not only secured the Indian frontier from invaders, but it has freed the interior of India from banditti. How has this result been achieved? Partly by legislation and partly by police. The English in India recognised the fact that they had a special class of crimes to deal with, and they framed a special department of criminal law to put those crimes down. ‘The *dakaitis* or gang robbers of Bengal,’ so runs a State paper written in 1772, ‘are not, like the robbers of England, individuals driven to such desperate courses by sudden want. They are robbers by profession and even by birth. They are formed into regular communities, and their families subsist by the spoils which they bring home to them.’ These spoils were frequently brought from great distances; and peaceful villages 300 miles up the Ganges lived by housebreaking in Calcutta. A special law was therefore framed against the crime of *dakaiti*, or gang robbery, that is to say, robbery committed by five or more persons. Another special crime was *thagi*, or strangling dexterously performed by bands



of professional murderers disguised as travelling merchants or pilgrims. The *thags* and *dakaitis*, or hereditary stranglers and gang robbers, thought none the worse of themselves for their profession, and were regarded by their countrymen with an awe which in the last century could hardly be distinguished from respect. 'I am a *thag* or strangler of the Royal Records,' one of these gentlemen was good enough to explain to an English officer: 'I and my fathers have been professional stranglers for twenty generations.' Accordingly special laws were framed to deal with the crime of 'being a *thag*' or professional strangler.

Special laws, however, would have done very little without special police. A separate department of the criminal administration was therefore created to deal with these widespread special crimes of India. It has effectively done its work. Some time ago, I was taken to visit the principal gaol of one of the Indian provinces. At parting, when I was thanking the governor of the prison for all he had shown me, he exclaimed: 'Ah! there is one thing more we must not forget to see.' He took me to a well-ventilated, comfortable room in the gaol hospital, where, lolling upon pillows, reclined a reverend, white-bearded man. 'This,' he said, 'is the last of our *thags*. He alone survives of the batch which we received twenty-five years ago.' I found that the venerable strangler had been for fifteen years enjoying himself in the hospital, the object of much solicitude to the doctors, and his life carefully prolonged by medical comforts, as an interesting relic of the past.

Nevertheless, this problem also presents itself from time to time, although in a mitigated form. The old predatory castes, the survivals of down-trodden, half-exterminated races under the native dynasties, still cling to their wandering life. But most of them, like the Bediyas, are now merely gipsy families, who roam from village to village, earning a little rice by their singing and juggling, or by their dexterity as bird-catchers, basket-weavers, and fortune-tellers. Their boldest flight in robbery is the pilfering of a stray chicken or kid. In recently annexed parts of India, however, as in the province of Oudh, the old predatory clans still give trouble. A special law, entitled the Criminal Tribes Act, has accordingly been levelled against them, and is occasionally enforced. For example, in the

Gonda district of Oudh, which passed under British rule only in 1855, there is a caste of professional thieves called Barwárs. They spread over the country in communities of forty or fifty, and have no objection to rob temples, but will not steal cattle. They go on more distant expeditions in parties of two or three. Their plunder is fairly divided, a portion being set apart to buy offerings of goats and ardent spirits to their patron goddess, and a fixed percentage being paid to the land-holder of the village. They carry on their trade with hereditary skill; but the rules of their religion sternly restrict their operations to the daytime, between sunrise and sunset. Any Barwár stealing by night is ignominiously turned out of the caste. In 1869 these scrupulous gentlemen numbered 2,500 in a single *pargana* or parish. But they have, under British rule, sunk from their ancient dignity as a hereditary robber community, and, like my old friend the professional strangler in the gaol hospital, they are regarded with much interest by the local authorities as a relic of the past. They have been placed under the operation of the Criminal Tribes Act, and are now betaking themselves to the more commonplace callings of small husbandmen and petty pilferers. Throughout almost the whole of British India the ancient special crimes have been extirpated. The old criminal tribes find it more profitable to be on the side of the law than against it, and now seek employment as detectives or house-watchmen. We have seen how the Indian navy, after having swept the sea of piracy and cleared out the robber nests at the river mouths, finished its work, and was abolished nineteen years ago. In like manner, the old lawlessness in the interior has now disappeared, and the special branch of the criminal administration known as the *Thagi* and *Dakaiti* or Stranglers' and Gang Robbers' Department has practically ceased from its operations in British India.

We have of late years heard a great deal about Indian famines. The heart of England has been touched by tales of suffering and privation on a vast scale, and the charity of England has flowed forth on a scale equally munificent. Famine is now recognised as one of the most difficult problems with which the Indian administration has to deal. A hundred years ago it was regarded not as a problem of administration, but as

a visitation of God utterly beyond the control of man. When the rains, on which the crops depended, fell short, no crops were reared, and the people perished. Sometimes their failure was confined to a single district, and only a few thousand families starved to death. Sometimes their failure extended to a province, and the victims were counted by hundreds of thousands. More rarely the rains failed over a still greater area, and, as in 1770, a third of the whole population perished. The loss of life was accepted in each case as a natural and an inevitable consequence of the loss of the crop. The earth had yielded no food, and so the people, in the ordinary and legitimate course of things, died. The famine of 1837 left behind so terrible a memory that to this day the peasants of Hamirpur employ it as an era by which to calculate their ages. Such calamities are accepted as the ordinary and inevitable visitations of Providence in Asia. It is said that the recent famine in Northern China stripped large tracts of one-half their inhabitants.

Here is a bird's-eye view of a single famine in the last century, taken almost word for word from the official records. 'The fields of rice,' one of the native superintendents of Bengal reported in the autumn of 1769, 'are become like fields of dried straw.' 'The mortality,' wrote the President of the Bengal Council in the following spring—'the mortality, the beggary exceed all description. Above one-third of the inhabitants have perished in the once plentiful province of Purniah, and in other parts the misery is equal.' All through the stifling summer of 1770 the people went on dying. The husbandmen sold their cattle; they sold their implements of agriculture; they devoured their seed-grain; they sold their sons and daughters, till at length no buyer of children could be found; they ate the leaves of trees and the grass of the field; and in June 1770, the Resident at the Durbar affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead. Day and night a torrent of famished and disease-stricken wretches poured into the great cities. At an early period of the year, pestilence had broken out. In March we find small-pox at Murshidabad, where it glided through the viceregal guards, and cut off the Prince Saifat in his palace. The streets were blocked up with promis-

cuous heaps of the dying and dead. Interment could not do its work quick enough; even the dogs and jackals, the public scavengers of the East, became unable to accomplish their revolting work, and the multitude of mangled and festering corpses at length threatened the existence of the citizens.

Two years after the dearth, Warren Hastings made a progress through Bengal, and he deliberately states the loss to have been 'at least one-third of the inhabitants,' or probably about ten millions of people. Nineteen years later, the next Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, had still to report to the Court of Directors that one-third of the Company's territory in Bengal was 'a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts.'

In that terrible summer of 1770, in which ten millions of peasants perished, only 9,000*l.* were distributed to aid the starving population of Bengal. 'A century later, in the much milder Bengal scarcity of 1874, the British Government spent close on four millions sterling, and during the five years ending 1878 it devoted over fourteen millions sterling in feeding its people during famine. Here is one great difference between the last century and the present one. But it is by no means the most important difference. In the last century neither the Government nor the people thought that it was possible to deal with a great Indian famine. Any such efforts were, in the words of the Bengali proverb, merely *watering the top of a tree whose roots are cut*. In the present century, earnest efforts have been made to bring famine within administrative control. A vast organisation of preventive and remedial agencies is constantly kept in readiness to deal with the periodically recurring dearths. Canals, irrigation works of many kinds, railways, roads, steamboats, and every improved form of modern communication, together with State charity in India and the munificent benevolence of the British nation at home—these are the weapons with which the Indian Government now does battle against famine.

That battle is not yet won. Many Indian administrators of great experience, both English and native, still believe that, when a real famine has once developed itself, it is impossible to prevent a terrible loss of life. This is a subject which will require very faithful dealing. The temptation in modern times

is not to grudge State aid during famine, but to lavish the public funds with an open hand, so that each official may be able to say that nothing which money could accomplish for the starving population was left undone. The problem of Indian famine is still unsolved ; but it has been accepted by all earnest administrators as one for which we must find a solution. The famine of 1877 and 1878 is supposed to have raised the mortality from 35 to 63 per thousand, causing from disease and starvation throughout all India an excess of  $5\frac{1}{4}$  million deaths. But the cultivated area in the stricken tracts was greater, by 120,000 acres, after the famine than before it. Heartrending as was the calamity, it produced no results analogous to those of famines in the last century and early years of the present one, when 'half the *ryots* were credibly reported to have perished,' when the landed classes were completely disorganized, and a third of the land relapsed into jungle.

The effect of famine in modern times upon the growth of the population is almost imperceptible. Taking the whole scarcities of the past thirty years, the Commissioners estimate the annual deaths from the diseases and all other causes connected with famine at 'less than 2 per 1,000' of the inhabitants. Permanent depopulation from any cause is now unknown. No frontier belt is left waste through fear of invasions from the north, no provinces are swept clean by Maratha cavalry from the south, no villages are laid waste by internal banditti, and no districts are now stripped of inhabitants by famine. In the last century all these causes of depopulation were at work. The quick-growing jungle spread over the deserted land, and the fierce beasts of the tropics were the undisputed lords of fertile tracts. In the old revenue accounts of the native Government during the last century there was a column in each district for *palátaka* or deserted lands, literally 'the lands from which the people had fled.' Even ten years after the famine of 1770, a once populous district was a silent jungle ; and in 1780 a small body of Sepoys could with difficulty force its way through its forests. 'For 120 miles,' says an eye-witness, 'they marched through but an extensive wood, all the way a perfect wilderness ; sometimes a small village presented itself in the midst of these jungles, with a little cultivated ground

around it, hardly sufficient to encamp the two battalions. These woods abound with tigers and bears, which infested the camp every night, but did no other damage than carrying off a child and killing some of the gentlemen's baggage bullocks.'

As the rural communities relinquished their hamlets and drew closer together towards the centre of a district, the wild beasts pressed hungrily on their rear. In vain the East India Company offered a reward for each tiger's head sufficient to maintain a peasant's family in comfort for three months—an item of outlay which our officers deemed so important that when, in the financial crisis of 1790–91, the Treasury had to suspend all payments, it made the tiger-money and diet allowance for prisoners the sole exceptions to the rule. In vain it spent the whole land revenue of a frontier district in rewards for killing wild beasts. A belt of jungle filled with ferocious animals lay for years around the cultivated land. The official records frequently speak of the mail-bag being carried off by tigers, and the custom of the mail-runners carrying a bell to scare away the wild beasts survived to our own day. Lord Cornwallis, in 1789, had to sanction a grant of public money to free the military road through Bengal from the depredations of these animals.

The ravages of the wild elephants were on a larger scale, and their extermination formed one of the most important duties of the British officers after the country passed under our rule. Tigers, leopards, and wolves slew their thousands of men and their hundreds of thousands of cattle. But the herd of wild elephants was absolutely resistless, lifting off roofs, pushing down walls, trampling a village under foot as if it were a city of sand which a child had built upon the shore. In two districts alone, during the last few years of the native administration, fifty-six hamlets with their surrounding lands 'had all been destroyed and gone to jungle, caused by the depredations of wild elephants.' Another official return states that forty market villages throughout Birbhum district had been deserted from the same cause. Large reductions had to be made in the land tax, and the East India Company borrowed tame elephants from the native Viceroy's stud in order to catch the wild ones. 'I had ocular proof on my journey,' writes an English officer in

1791, 'of their ravages. The poor timid native ties his cot in a tree, to which he retires when the elephants approach, and silently views the destruction of his cottage and the whole profits of his labour.' 'One night,' writes an English surveyor in 1810, 'although I had a guard, the men of the village close to my tent retired to the trees, and the women hid themselves among the cattle, leaving their huts a prey to the elephants, who know very well where to look for grain. Two nights before, some of them had unroofed a hut in the village, and had eaten up all the grain which a poor family possessed.' 'Most fortunately for the population of the country,' wrote the greatest elephant hunter of the last century, 'they delight in the sequestered range of the mountains; if they preferred the plains, whole kingdoms would be laid waste.'

All this is now changed. One of the complaints of the modern Englishman in India is that he can so seldom get a shot at a tiger. Wolves are dying out in many provinces; the ancient Indian lion has disappeared. The wild elephant is so rare that he is specially protected by the Government, and in most parts of India he can only be caught by official licence and under official supervision. Many districts have petitioned for a close season, so as to preserve the edible game still remaining. The only animal that has defied the energy of the British official is the snake. One may, however, judge of the loss of life by wild beasts in the last century from the deaths caused by this their chief survivor at the present day. The ascertained number of persons who died from snake-bite in 1875 was 17,000, out of a total of 21,391 killed by snakes and all other wild animals. The deaths from wild beasts in the last century were probably not under 150,000 a year.

I shall now briefly summarise some of the outward and obvious results of a century of British rule. As regards the northern or Himalayan frontier of India, the wild hill tribes are no longer invaders, but are employed as loyal soldiers or border police. As regards the southern frontier of India, the sea, the pirate races have been converted into cheap and excellent seamen. Indian waters are now as safe as the English Channel, and the Indian navy, having finished its work, is disbanded. As regards internal disturbances, banditti are

unknown, breaches of the law are rarer in India than in England, and the special department which was created to deal with the old special crimes of India now finds no more work to do within the British provinces. Famine, which in the last century was considered as the act of God, beyond any help of man, has been accepted as the great administrative problem of our day; and a vast organization of public works, State relief, and private charity is interposed between the Indian races and the merciless calamities of nature. As regards the reclamation of waste land, formerly the local hero was the man who cut down the jungle; now a special branch of legislation is required to enable the Government to conserve what jungle remains, and to plant fresh forests. These are a few of the outward and visible results of a century of British rule in India.



## II

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE

THESE are other and less obvious results of British rule ; and perhaps foremost among them is the development of new industries and the growth of great centres of trade. Commercial cities, in our sense of the word, did not exist in ancient India. The capital was the standing camp of the monarch ; its trade depended upon the presence of the Court. Magnificent Emperors required magnificent cities around them, and an inconsiderate or a tyrannical prince ordered the movements of the citizens as he ordered the movements of his troops. One cruel Emperor of the house of Tughlak forced the whole inhabitants of Delhi, in the north of India, to migrate to his new capital, Daulatabad, 700 miles away in the distant south. Thousands perished on the road. The king twice changed his mind. Twice he allowed the miserable people to return to Delhi ; twice he compelled them on pain of death to leave it. One of these forced migrations took place during a famine ; a great part of the citizens died of hunger ; the rest were utterly ruined. But, says the historian, 'the Emperor's orders were strictly complied with, and the ancient capital was left desolate.'

A large external trade was indeed an impossibility at the native metropolis, Delhi, which lay more than a thousand miles from the river's mouth. But even the capitals of the seaboard provinces were chosen for military purposes, and with small regard to the commercial capabilities of their situation. Thus, in Lower Bengal, the Muhammadans under different dynasties fixed in succession on six towns as their capital. Each of these successive capitals was on a river bank ; but not one of them possessed any foreign trade, nor indeed could have been

approached by an old East Indiaman. They were simply the Court and camp of the king or the viceroy for the time being. Colonies of skilful artisans settled round the palaces of the nobles to supply the luxurious fabrics of oriental life. After the prince and Court had in some new caprice abandoned the city, the artisans remained, and a little settlement of weavers was often the sole surviving proof that the decaying town had once been a capital city. Thus the exquisite muslins of Dacca and the soft silks of Murshidabad still bear witness to the days when these two places were successively the capital of Bengal. The artisans worked in their own houses. The manufactures of India were essentially domestic industries, conducted by special castes, each member of which wove at his own hereditary loom, and in his own village or homestead.

One of the earliest results of British rule in India was the growth of great mercantile towns. Our rule derived its origin from our commerce, and from the first the East India Company's efforts were directed to creating centres for maritime trade. Other European nations, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French, have rivalled us as merchants and conquerors in India, and each of them in turn attempted to found great seaports. The long Indian coast, both on the east and the west, is dotted with decaying villages which were once the busy scenes of those nations' early European trade. Of all their famous capitals in India, not one has now the commercial importance of Cardiff or Greenock, and not one of them has a harbour which would admit at low tide a ship drawing twenty feet.

The truth is that it is far easier to pitch a camp and erect a palace, which, under the native dynasties, was synonymous with founding a capital, than it is to create a centre of trade. Such centres must grow of themselves, and cannot be called suddenly into existence by the fiat of the wisest autocrat. It is in this difficult enterprise, in which the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French had successively failed, that the British in India have succeeded. We make our appearance in the long list of races who have ruled that splendid Empire, not as temple builders like the Hindus, nor as palace and tomb builders like the Musalmans, nor as fort builders like the

Marathas, nor as church builders like the Portuguese, but in the more commonplace capacity of town builders, as a nation that had the talent for selecting sites on which great commercial cities would grow up, and who have in this way created a new industrial life for the Indian people.

Calcutta and Bombay, the two commercial capitals of India, are essentially the creations of British rule. Shortly after Bombay was ceded by the Portuguese to the British Crown in 1661, as part of the dower of the wife of Charles II., the king was glad to hand over his unprofitable acquisition, which was then considered the grave of Europeans, to a company of London merchants for an annual payment of 10*l.* in gold. Bombay city has now close on three-quarters of a million of inhabitants, living entirely by commerce. It ranks next to London (if we except Calcutta and its municipal suburbs) in the cities of the British Empire. Its population is nearly one and a-half times that of Glasgow or Liverpool, and nearly double that of Manchester or Birmingham.

The history of Calcutta, the metropolis of India, is still more striking. Together with its municipal suburbs, it has a population exceeding three-quarters of a million, or nearly double that of any city in Great Britain except London. Less than two centuries ago, when our countrymen first settled at Calcutta, they were a poor band of fugitive merchants seeking shelter from the extortions of the native ruler of Bengal; and the future City of Palaces consisted of three clusters of mud huts on the river bank. It was not their first attempt to found a city where they could trade in peace. The seaboard of Bengal was the scene of many an earlier and unsuccessful effort. Sometimes the English were driven away by the exactions of the native general in charge of the surrounding district; sometimes the river on which their little town was rising shifted its course, and left their wharves high and dry; sometimes the estuary which they had fixed upon as a harbour silted up, and long banks of sand rose between their port and the sea. Calcutta on the eastern coast of India, and Bombay on the west, are the results of a long and patient series of unsuccessful efforts—they represent the survival of the fittest; and many an English heart was broken, and many a hard-earned fortune

lost, in attempting to found ports at the mouths of silting rivers, and amid the dismal Bengal swamps, before Calcutta rose to its proud position, next to London, as the metropolis of India and the second city of the British Empire.

In one of these deserted seats of the early British trade I have seen the husbandman driving his plough over what were once the wet docks, and turning up spars and rotten fragments of sloops from the furrows. Others of them have entirely disappeared from the map. For example, the harbour on the Orissa seaboard, which was officially reported, as late as 1809, to be the safest and most frequented port on that coast, has now ceased to exist. The mouth of the river has so completely silted up, and is so perfectly concealed by a dense fringe of jungle, that it is almost impossible for a strange vessel to discover it. A similar ruin has, in a milder degree, fallen on every ancient seaport of India. All round the Indian coast, from the Gulf of Cambay to the mouths of the Irawadi, the silt-bearing rivers and the sand-charged tides have built up barriers of mud between the old historic harbours and modern commerce.

This fate would long ago have overtaken Calcutta but for the strenuous efforts of our countrymen. The Hugli river, upon which Calcutta lies, forms one of the chief mouths of the Ganges. Six great historical ports have been built upon its banks. The oldest of them, Satgaon, the ancient royal port of Bengal under the native dynasties, has been completely deserted by the navigable channel, and is now a thatched village crumbling upon the banks of a muddy ditch. The Dutch, the French, and the Danes each set up capitals and ports of their own on the Hugli river, off which vessels of the largest tonnage in the last century used to lie. Every one of these once famous emporiums is now blocked up by banks of sand and silt, and is unapproachable by sea-going ships at the present day.

Calcutta has been saved from the same isolation by a system of river-engineering which forms one of the memorable triumphs in the contest of man with nature. The river Hugli has ceased to be the direct channel of the Ganges; but Calcutta alone, of all the successive river capitals of Bengal, has overcome the

difficulties incident to its position as a deltaic centre of commerce. Strenuous efforts of engineering are required to keep open the three offshoots of the Ganges above Calcutta which combine to form the Hugli. Still greater watchfulness and more extensive operations are demanded by the eighty miles of the Hugli itself below Calcutta, to save it from the fate of other deltaic streams, and to prevent it from silting up. In 1853 the deterioration of the Hugli channel led to a proposal to found an auxiliary port to Calcutta on the Matla, another mouth of the Ganges farther east. A committee then appointed to inquire into the subject reported that 'the river Hugli was deteriorating gradually and progressively.' At that time 'science had done nothing to aid in facilities for navigation,' but since then everything has been effected which the foresight of modern engineering could suggest or the power of modern capital could achieve. Observations on the condition of the Hugli channels are taken hourly, gigantic steam-dredgers are continually at work, and the shifting of the shoals is carefully recorded. By these means the port of Calcutta has been kept open for ships of the largest tonnage, drawing twenty-six feet, and almost seems to have outlived the danger which threatened its existence.

I have dwelt on the rise of our commercial capitals in India because the development of city life in India means the growth of a new industrial career for the people. Formerly, as we have seen, the industries of India were essentially domestic manufactures, each man working at his hereditary occupation, at his own loom or at his own forge. Under British rule a new era of production has arisen in India—an era of production on a great scale based upon the co-operation of capital and labour, in place of the small household manufactures of ancient times. To us, who have from our youth grown up in the midst of a keen commercial civilisation, it is not easy to realise the change thus implied. I shall briefly indicate some of the most salient features of the revolution which it has wrought in the industrial life of the Indian people.

The great industrial cities of British India are the type of the new state of things implied by this change. Under native rule the country had reached what political economists of

Mill's school called 'the stationary stage' of civilisation. The husbandmen simply raised the food-grains necessary to feed them from one harvest to another. If the food crops failed in any district, the local population had no capital and no other crops wherewith to buy food from other districts; so, in the natural and inevitable course of things, they perished. Now the peasants of India raise other and far more profitable crops than the mere food-stuffs on which they live. They also raise an annual surplus of grain for exportation, which is available for India's own wants in time of need; and there is a much larger aggregate of capital in the country, that is to say, a much greater national reserve or staying power. The so-called 'stationary stage' in India has disappeared, and the Indian peasant is keenly alive to each new demand which the market of the world may make upon the industrial capabilities of his country.

Thus, up to 1850, cotton was produced on a small scale in India, and the total value exported averaged during the previous five years only  $1\frac{3}{4}$  millions sterling. Ten years later, the American war gave rise to a sudden demand; and the Indian cotton exports rushed up, till, in 1865, they exceeded the enormous value of  $37\frac{3}{4}$  millions sterling. This vast amount of money went into the pockets of the cultivators, who, the moment that they had found a more profitable crop than their old food-stuffs, quickly began to cultivate it on a large scale. What the American war was to the Bombay peasant, the Russian war had been to the Bengal husbandman. The blockade of the Baltic ports put an end to Great Britain's supply of fibres from Russia during the Crimean campaign. Forthwith the Bengal peasant enormously increased his production of jute. In 1852-53, before the Crimean war, the whole export of jute from Bengal was about 100,000/. In 1872-73 it exceeded  $4\frac{1}{4}$  millions sterling, an increase of fortyfold.

The Indian peasant knows, however, not only how to take prompt advantage of a rise in prices, he knows also how to quickly recoup himself for the loss of a market. The re-extended cultivation in America led to a drop, eventually reaching to 30 millions sterling, in the Indian cotton exports. But the Indian peasant has more than made good the loss by the growth

of other staples. The year 1865 was one of inflated markets throughout the world, and the Indian exports reached the unprecedented height of 69 millions. Last year, 1879-80, was a year of great depression in many markets, but the Indian exports again exceeded 69 millions sterling.

During the same period vast numbers of people from the overcrowded interior of Bengal had been drafted off to the border districts, which, till the British obtained the country, were left waste through fear of the wild frontier races. These peasants, instead of starving in their old densely populated homes, are now earning high wages on the tea plantations, and last year exported three millions sterling worth of tea.

All these are essentially rural industries, which owe their existence to the new commercial life developed by the cities of British India. Besides such rural industries, however, there are a number of manufactures and productions which more especially appertain to the industrial life of great towns. Coal mines have been discovered in several provinces, and now employ tens of thousands of miners. Mills and steam factories have followed the opening up of the coal fields. Twenty-six years ago there was not a single loom worked by steam-power in India; there are now  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million spindles employed in the cotton manufacture alone, and 40,000 spindles employed in the manufacture of jute.

Early in the last century, before the English became the ruling power in India, the country did not produce a million sterling a year of staples for exportation. During the first three-quarters of a century of our rule the exports slowly rose to about eleven millions in 1830. During the half-century which has elapsed since that date they have quickly multiplied by sixfold. In 1880 India sold to foreign nations 66 millions sterling worth of strictly Indian produce, which the Indian husbandman had reared, and for which he was paid. In that year the total trade of India, including exports and imports, exceeded 122 millions sterling.

These figures are so great, and the material progress which they indicate is so enormous, that they elude the grasp of the imagination. It may assist us in realising the change which they imply in the industrial life of the people to glance at the

history of two single ports. I shall first take the local harbour of a rural district, Akyab, in British Burma. In 1826, when we obtained the province in which it is situated, Akyab was merely a fishing village. Within four years, by 1830, it had developed into a little town, with a trade valued at 7,000*l*. In 1879 the trade exceeded 2 millions sterling, so that the trade of Akyab has multiplied close on three hundredfold in fifty years. The other example is one on a larger scale. When we obtained Calcutta, in 1686, it consisted of three mud hamlets, scarcely raised above the river slime, without any trade whatsoever. After a century and a-half of British rule the total value of the sea-borne trade of Calcutta in 1820 was 12 millions sterling. In 1879 it had risen to over 61½ millions sterling, besides 45 millions of trade with the interior, making a total commerce of 106 millions sterling a year at a town which had not ten pounds' worth of external trade when the British settled there.

India has more to sell to the world than she requires to buy from it. During the five years ending 1879 the staples which she exported exceeded by an annual average of 21 millions sterling the merchandise which she imported. One-third of this balance she receives in cash; and during the five years she accumulated silver and gold, exclusive of re-exports, at the rate of 7 millions per annum. With another third she pays interest at low rates for the capital with which she has constructed the material framework of her industrial life—her railways (120 millions), irrigation works, cotton mills, coal mines, indigo factories, tea gardens, docks, steam navigation lines, and debt. For that capital she goes into the cheapest market in the world, London, and she remits the interest, not in cash, but in her own staples, which that capital has enabled her to produce and to bring to the seaboard. With the remaining third of her surplus exports she pays the home charges of the Government to which she owes the peace and security that alone have rendered possible her industrial development. The home charges include not only the salaries of the supervising staff in England, and the pensions of the whole military and civil services, who have given their life's work to India, but the munitions of war, a section of the army, including the cost of



its recruitment and transport, all stores for public works, and the whole *matériel* of a civilised administration. That *matériel* can be bought more cheaply in England than in India, and India's expenditure on good government is as essential an item for her industrial development, and repays her as high a profit, as the interest which she pays in England for the capital with which she has constructed her dockyards and railways. To sum up, India sells 21 millions a year more of her staples to foreign nations than the merchandise which she buys from them. She takes payment of one-third of the balance, or say 7 millions, in good government, and so secures that protection to person and property which she never had before and which alone have rendered her industrial development possible. With another third, or 7 millions, she pays for the capital with which she has constructed the material framework of that development—pays for it at the lowest interest, and pays for it, not in cash, but in her own products. The remaining 7 millions she receives in gold and silver, and puts them in her purse.

I feel that I have taxed, perhaps too heavily, the reader's attention with so many figures. But it is impossible for anyone to realise the progress made by India under British rule without having the statistics placed before him. Commerce and manufactures have been created for the people, vast outlets opened up for the productions of the country. The reader will perhaps pardon me for having wearied him with statistics when he remembers that those statistics mean a new industrial life for India—an industrial life which supersedes the sword of the invader and wholesale starvation by famine, in maintaining the balance between a population of small cultivators and the available land.

The effects of this new industrial life are not, however, confined to the great Indian cities. The new outlets for Indian staples have led to a rise in the price of the husbandman's crops, and in the value of the land on which they are grown. In many districts, during the last century, the entire price of a field was the value of the crop upon it. In fertile deltas the price of land did not exceed two years' purchase. In the same districts it is now from twelve to twenty years' purchase. It has been my duty to make inquiries in every province of India as to the

interest which money yields. I find that for small loans to the cultivators the old native rate of  $37\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum still prevails. But if anyone has a landed property to pledge, he can borrow at less than one-third of that rate of interest; and a native merchant of Calcutta who wishes to retire and purchase an estate thinks himself fortunate if he can invest in land yielding 7 per cent. clear per annum. Landed property, which in the last century was one of the most precarious possessions, has now become the most secure form of investment in India, precisely as it is in England. The growth of rural rights, and the increase in the value of land, have advanced side by side with the creation of a new industrial life, and with the opening up of fresh outlets for the productions of the country.

These are a few of the results of English rule on the material development of India. It is not necessary for me here to dwell on the more obvious and often-recited aspects of that progress, on the network of roads and railways which we have spread over India, on the canals by which we have multiplied and secured her internal resources, or on the spacious harbours by which we have brought those resources into the market of the world. All these and many other agencies of material progress are involved in the one great fact, the creation of that new industrial life which has taken place under British rule. But, before closing this chapter, I should like to direct attention to a few of the moral aspects of that rule.

In the last century education in India was a monopoly in the hands of the priests—a power which they employed to subjugate the minds of the people. Under British rule, education in India has been taken entirely out of the hands of the priests, and it has become the great emancipator of the Indian races. In ancient India a Brahman was forbidden, on pain of death, to teach the sacred books to the masses. Under British rule the State schools offer instruction to everyone, and open the same careers to all. In the last century the Hindus were taught, from their earliest childhood, that they must remain imprisoned for life in the caste in which they were born. We have now two millions of boys and girls receiving public instruction in India. These two millions of native children are

learning that every occupation and every profession in British India is open to every boy on the benches of an Indian school. The rising generation in India have been freed from superstitious terrors, they have been led to give up cruel practices, they have learned to detest and despise their forefathers' bloody rites. Widow burning, infanticide, hook-swinging, self-mutilation, and human sacrifice—these are a few familiar relics of the old bondage under which the Indian intellect cowered and the Indian heart bled. Great as has been the material progress of India during the past century, its emancipation from ignorance and priestcraft forms, to my mind, a far more splendid memorial of British rule. Truly the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The result has been a revival of letters such as the world has never seen. On March 31, 1818, the Serampur missionaries issued the first newspaper ever printed in a native language of India. The vernacular journals now exceed 230 in number, and are devoured every week by half a million readers. In 1878, 5,000 books were published in India, besides a vast importation of literature from England. Of this mass of printed matter only 500 were translations, the remaining 4,500 being original works. The Indian intellect is marching forth in many directions, rejoicing in its new strength. More copies of books of poetry, philosophy, law, and religion issue every year from the Press of British India than the whole manuscripts compiled during any century of native rule. In music, the revival has been effected on the old Sanskrit basis. One of my native friends has published a series of volumes on Indian music in English and Sanskrit; organized an orchestra of about fifty performers to illustrate the art; and presented complete collections of Hindu instruments to the Conservatoire at Paris, and other institutions in Europe. Among the earliest subjects which the new movement took as its theme was the celebration of the Queen of England and her ancestors, in a Sanskrit volume entitled the *Victoria Gitika*.

The drama has in all ages been a great educator of the Indian races; and it was the first branch of Hindu literature to heartily accept the spoken dialects. The native theatre forms

the best, indeed the only, school in which an Englishman can acquaint himself with the indoor life of the people. He suddenly finds himself in an era of intense dramatic productiveness. Last year 175 plays were published in India, and patriotic young natives form themselves into companies to produce their national dramas. Many of the pieces are vernacular renderings of stories from the Sanskrit epics. Others have a political significance, and deal with the phases of development upon which India has entered under the influence of British rule. One Bengali play, the *Nildarpan*, or the 'Mirror of Indigo,' became the subject of a celebrated trial in Calcutta; while others, such as *Ekei ki bale Sabhyata*, 'Is this what you call civilisation?' suggest serious thoughts to a candid English mind.

I have often been asked how it is that amid this dayspring of the Indian intellect Christianity makes so little way. The Hindus are one of the religious races of the earth. A series of great reformations during the past ten centuries have given to their national faith a vitality which has defied alike the persecutions and the persuasions of their conquerors. Last year there were published in India two books of travels, seven on politics, and 1,502 on religion, or nearly a third of the whole works which issued from the press. Every great Indian reformer, from Buddha downwards, has, in spite of himself, had miraculous powers ascribed to him by the loving piety of his followers. At this moment there is an able and earnest man walking about Calcutta who, if his disciples can only refrain from writing his life for fifty years, will attain the dignity of a Divine Founder. Great tidal waves of religion are sweeping over the Indian mind. The theistic element in Hinduism has powerfully re-asserted itself as the Brahma Samáj, or Deist Church of Bengal. The old Hindu dissenters, such as the Vaishnavs, have greatly increased their following, and new popular sects are springing up. Even orthodox Hinduism has financially prospered, the railways having done much to render pilgrimage pleasant. A century ago, Muhammadanism seemed to be dying of inanition in Bengal. In the mosques, or amid the serene palace life of the Musalman nobility, a few *maulavis* of piety and learning calmly carried on the routine of their

faith. But the Musalman peasantry of Bengal had relapsed into a mongrel breed of circumcised Hindus, not one in ten of whom could recite the *kalma*—a simple creed, whose constant repetition is a matter of unconscious habit with all good Muhammadans. Under our rule fervid Muhammadan missionaries have wandered from district to district, commanding the people to return to the pure faith, and denouncing God's wrath on the indifferent. A great body of the Bengali Musalmans have purged themselves of rural superstitions, and evinced such an ardour of revivalist zeal as occasionally to cause some little inconvenience to the Government.

It is, therefore, not from any lack of the religious instinct in India that Christianity fails to make progress. The Muhammadan ideal of a missionary is a lean old man with a staff and a couple of ragged disciples. Among the Hindus, for the past 2,400 years, every preacher who would appeal to the popular heart must fulfil two conditions, and conform to a certain type—he must cut himself off from the world by a solemn act, like the Great Renunciation of Buddha; and he must come forth from his solitary self-communings with a simple message. This message need not be original, for it must consist of a re-assertion, in some form, of the unity of God and the equality of man. One poor low-caste, who issued, haggard and naked, from the jungles of the Central Provinces, with only a broken cry of 'Sat-nám, Sat-nám, Sat-nám,' 'The True God, the True God, the True God,' and a message not to drink spirits, made over a quarter of a million of followers before his death in 1850.

Our missionaries do not seem to the natives to belong to this type. They are highly regarded as men of letters and as teachers of youth, as the guides who first opened up the stores of western knowledge to India, and who are still the pioneers of education among the backward races. The mission printing presses may be said to have created Bengali as a literary language, and to have developed ruder tongues, like Santáli and Assamese, into written vehicles for thought. But, whatever may be the self-sacrifices of our missionaries, or the internal conflicts which they endure, their lives do not appear to the poor toilers of the rice-field in the light of a Great Renuncia-

tion. To the natives, the missionary seems to be a charitable Englishman who keeps an excellent cheap school, speaks the language well, preaches a European form of their old incarnations, and drives out his wife and little ones in a pony-carriage. This friendly neighbour, this affectionate husband, this good man, is of an estimable type, of a type which has done much to raise the English character in the eyes of the natives, but not of the traditional type to which the popular preacher in India must conform.

The missionary has neither the personal sanctity nor the simple message of the visionary who comes forth from his fastings and temptation in the forest. Instead, he has a dogmatic theology which, when he discusses it with the Brahmans, seems to the unprepared populace to resolve itself into a wrangle as to the comparative merits of the Hindu triad and the European Trinity, and the comparative evidence for the incarnation of Krishna and the incarnation of Christ. The uneducated native prefers, if he is to have a triad and an incarnation, to keep his own ones. The educated native thinks that triads and incarnations belong to a stage of mental development which he has passed.

It should be remembered, however, that apart from the higher claims of Christianity there are always a number of human chances running in its favour in India. Its propaganda is supported by a steady supply of capital which none of the native proselytising sects can command. It maintains, therefore, a continuity of effort and a constant exertion of brain-power which the intenser but more spasmodic apostles of other creeds cannot rival. There is the possibility, any day, of some missionary striking the native imagination as a religious reformer of the true Indian type, and converting half a million of people. The Christian missions are, moreover, great educational agencies, and naturally attract to their faith a certain number of the young minds which they train and develop. The dearths which periodically afflict the country also tend to swell the Christian population, as the missionaries are often the best available guardians to whom the State can make over the thousands of orphans that a great famine leaves behind. The schisms among the Hindu theistic sects may from time to time

lead wearied inquirers after truth to seek rest within the authoritative Christian dogma. Already the Christian population numbers one and a-half millions; over one million being Roman Catholics, and under half a million Protestants. While, therefore, Christianity has to contend with fundamental difficulties in India, it has, merely from the human point of view, many permanent chances in its favour. No one who has studied the facts would venture to predict that it may not, some day, strike root as one of the popular religions of India.

Meanwhile the intellectual upheaval is profoundly influencing family life. European ideas are knocking at the door of the *zanána*, and we hear confused cries from within, which seem to show that the death-like monotony of woman's existence in India is broken. The degradation of the female intelligence means the loss of one-half its brain-power to a nation. Last October, while I was writing these pages, an accomplished Brahman lady was travelling through Bengal with her brother, holding public meetings on the education and emancipation of women. 'They were received everywhere,' says an Indian correspondent, 'with great enthusiasm by the Hindus, who were delighted to hear their holy Sanskrit from a woman's lips. It seemed to them as if Saraswati (the goddess of Eloquence) had come down to visit them. Instead of a hot, confined room, we had a long and broad terrace, open to the sky, and with the Ganges flowing at our feet. The meeting was at half-past four in the afternoon, by which time the terrace was shaded from the sun by trees and houses to the westward. At the eastern end of the terrace a small marble table, with a glass of flowers on it, and some chairs were set, and there Roma stood up, facing the west, and addressed her audience. On her right was the Ganges, covered with large broad-sailed boats of a type which has perhaps lasted for 2,000 years. There was little or nothing around to remind her or her audience of European civilisation. The clear blue sky and the broad river coming sweeping down from the walls of Benares dominated everything else. It was such a place as Buddha might have chosen for addressing his followers.'

This young lady is twenty-two years of age, the daughter of a learned *pandit* and public official, slight and girlish-looking, with a fair complexion and light grey eyes. She is now engaged

to be married to a Bengali pleader, an M.A. of the Calcutta University.

Side by side with the stirring of the Indian intellect there has also been an awakening of the Indian races to a new political life. The old village communities of India, with their rural guilds and castes, and all the good and evil which they implied, had in many provinces lost their vitality before the commencement of the English rule. Their memories and their outward forms survived; but the life had been trodden out of them beneath the heel of the Musalman taxgatherer and the hoofs of the Maratha cavalry. In some parts the village institutions had ceased to protect the peasantry from external oppression, or even to settle their disputes among themselves. Every attempt on a large scale to resuscitate the ancient village community has failed. For a time the English rulers were content to deplore this fact—a fact which, in reality, marks the advance of a race from a lower to a higher stage of social organization. But during the past twenty-five years efforts have been made to develop a new political life in place of the old village guilds which had disappeared. The village has given place to the municipality in India. Before our own eyes we see the self-government, which the primitive village communities had ceased to give, developing into a higher form of self-government under municipal institutions. At this moment there are nearly one thousand municipalities in India, with a municipal population exceeding fourteen millions, and raising among themselves for local purposes a revenue of close on two millions sterling. There are also, in some of the provinces, district boards and rural unions, which do for the country what the municipalities do for the towns. The Indian races are visibly passing from the village into the municipal stage of social organization; and the first lessons in local government are being learned by fourteen millions of native citizens.



*THE WORK TO BE DONE*

## III

THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE FOOD SUPPLY  
TO THE GROWING POPULATION.

THERE is, as I mentioned at starting, another side to the picture. Good work has been done by our countrymen in India, but greater difficulties now confront them. The population has in many parts outgrown the food-producing powers of the soil. To some observers the situation seems so hopeless that a magazine writer lately urged that we should retire from a spectacle of overcrowded human misery which we are powerless to relieve. But the English are not a people to take on themselves a great national task like the government of India, and then to desert the ship when the breakers come in sight. To others, the cause for despair is that the difficulty proceeds from the very merits of our rule ; and that the better we do our duty by India, the more the people will multiply and the harder will become their struggle for life. To despondents of this nobler class, I would say, 'Look back at what our countrymen have already achieved in India, and you will not despair of what they may yet accomplish.' Their history from the commencement has been a narrative of great difficulties overcome. A hundred years ago no one would have ventured to predict the united peaceful India of the present day. Therefore it is that I have tried to show what British rule has done in India, in order that we may, with a firm heart, examine what it has yet to do for the Indian people.

I shall now ask attention to two of the saddest problems with which a State can be called to deal—namely, the poverty

of the people, and the alleged inability of the Government to pay its way. With these fundamental problems yet unsolved in India, it may seem a delusive optimism to speak of the success of the British administration. It profits little that we have put an end to invasion from without, established order and security in place of anarchy and rapine within, covered the land with schools and court-houses, with roads, railways, and canals, and given a vast impulse to population and trade—all this profits little if the people have not enough to eat, and if the country cannot support the cost of our rule. There is some exaggeration, but there is also much truth in criticism such as this. The poverty of a densely crowded population of small cultivators, and the difficulty of defraying a civilised government from the revenues of an Asiatic country, lie at the very root of our position in India. These are the initial facts with which we have to struggle, and until they are accepted as the basis of this country's dealings with India, our financial position there will be one of danger.

India was for long in the unfortunate position of a man who is supposed to be richer than he really is. If the British nation had realised the poverty of India, it would have refrained from several acts which now form standing reproaches against England in the native press. Fortunately for the national honour, the list of our injustices to India, although sufficiently painful to all who wish to see this country discharge its great duties in a noble spirit, is not a very long one. But under pressure of party exigencies and class interests in England that list may at any moment be added to. For example, we should think it passing strange if we were taxed in London in order to set up an English museum in Calcutta. Yet a proposal was not long ago made to charge, at least in part, to the Indian revenues the cost of an Indian museum in London. I am glad to say that this attempt failed. Indeed, it has ended in the Indian exhibitions in London being henceforth maintained at the expense of the nation which enjoys them, and in a saving (I am told) of 15,000*l.* a year formerly charged to the Indian revenues. When next you visit the Amravati sculptures at the British Museum, or the gorgeous Indian rooms and their delicate art products at South Kensington, you may have the satisfaction of

knowing that your pleasure is honestly paid for by the English Exchequer.

I hope that this country will realise once and for all the poverty of the people from whom the Indian revenues are raised. When we have clearly recognised this, we shall see that the smallest act of financial sharp-dealing with India is an act not only of iniquity but of cruelty and meanness, and one which carries with it lasting reproach.

How comes it that India was once held to be so rich, and now proves to be so poor? The wealth of the East Indies was handed down as a tradition from Roman times, and has for centuries been an accepted belief in Europe. There is usually an element of truth in such a belief, and the traditional wealth of India appeared to rest on a very solid basis. In the first place, India has always been the greatest accumulator of the precious metals known to commerce. Besides her own production of gold—by no means inconsiderable in ancient times, and perhaps destined to be again revived on a great scale in our own day—India absorbed bullion to an extent which seemed, to the economists of bygone centuries, to threaten the depletion of Europe. But if the power of amassing gold and silver be accepted as a proof of the wealth of a country, India is richer now than ever. Roman patriots deplored that the eastern trade, including China, India, and Arabia, drained the empire of three-quarters of a million sterling of silver per annum; and the loudest complaint against the East India Company in the seventeenth century was aimed at its privilege—a privilege guarded by many restrictions—of exporting 30,000*l.* a year of bullion and foreign coin to the East. Well, the average importation of gold and silver into India during the past ten years averaged 9 millions sterling per annum; and in 1878 it exceeded 17 millions. Of this enormous sum, India retains by far the greatest proportion. Thus, after deducting all re-exports, so far as they can be ascertained, by sea, India accumulated close on seventy millions sterling in gold and silver during the past ten years.

There is another sense in which India appeared to our ancestors to be a very wealthy country. It contained a number of kings and princes, and the lavish magnificence alike of the

imperial and of the local Courts seemed a proof of the inexhaustible riches of the people. The early travellers never realised that India was the size of all Europe less Russia, and that the Indian Courts must be compared in number and display, not with the palace of his own single sovereign at home, but with all the Courts of Europe. The Indian princes, moreover, were compelled by the absence of any system of national credit to hoard great sums with a view to meeting sudden demands, such as the mutiny of their troops or the rebellion of a too powerful kinsman. These hoards they kept to a large extent in precious gems, so that the national reserve fund was also a principal means of courtly display. When Nadir Shah sacked Delhi in 1739, and cleared out the imperial treasures, he found, if we may believe our authorities,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions of specie, and  $28\frac{1}{2}$  millions worth of jewels, ornaments, and plate. Of the specie, only one million is said—I know not on what original evidence—to have been in gold or silver coin. From the treasury of Bengal, the richest province of the empire, our countrymen in 1757 extracted about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling, but only 58,000*l.* in rupees, the rest being in specie and jewels. The cash balances of the British Government of India varied between 1870 and 1878 from 25 to 15 millions sterling. But the British cash balances are hidden away in strong rooms out of sight; while the Peacock Throne blazed with its diamonds before the eyes of every foreign ambassador.

There is more accumulated wealth held by natives in two cities of British India, Calcutta and Bombay—cities which a couple of centuries ago were mud-hut hamlets—than all the treasures of the Imperial and local Courts under the Mughal Empire. The magnificence of the rich natives still excites the admiration of European travellers. In a narrative of a recent Indian journey, the President of the Cheshire Salt Chamber of Commerce dwells on the costly entertainments given by native residents of Calcutta to over a thousand guests. ‘Gentlemen at home,’ he says, ‘who repeat the cant phrase “the poverty of India,” should witness a scene like this, and we warrant they would be cured. Our host, a man still in the full prime of life, is the architect of his own great fortune, gained in lawful commerce. The expenditure of ten thousand pounds upon one

entertainment by a private citizen does not smack much of the poverty of the country.' If, therefore, we are content to accept travellers' tales of the magnificence of native grandees as a proof of the wealth of the country, India's old reputation for riches might stand as high as ever.

But we cannot accept such proof. We judge nowadays of the wealth of nations not by the splendour of individuals, but by the prosperity of the people. This test the early European travellers never applied to India. If they applied it, they would have found that beneath the extravagance of the few lay the misery of the many. Their own narratives supply evidence that the common lot in India was a very wretched one under the native dynasties ; and a hundred years of British rule have scarcely sufficed to obliterate the traces of oppression and rural servitude which those dynasties left behind. The change in our views regarding the wealth or poverty of India results from the application of the more enlightened tests by which political economy has taught us to judge of the well-being of a people.

Judged by those standards, India is, and ever since it came under modern observation has always been, a poor country. Alike under Mughal and British rule, we see a population of small husbandmen contending, without any reserve of capital, against the chances and misfortunes of the tropical year. The lives of millions of families have depended each autumn on a few inches more or less of rainfall. The calamities inseparable from such a condition of things were intensified under native rule by invasions from without ; by rebellions, feuds, and hordes of banditti within ; and by the perpetual oppression of the weak by the strong. On the other hand, these disorders to some extent worked their own cure. They kept down the population, and the pressure of the people on the soil was much less severe than it now is. When India passed into our hands in the last century, there was plenty of good land for everyone who wanted it. The importance of this fact to a people consisting entirely of cultivators can scarcely be over-rated. In 1789 the Governor-General declared, after three years' vigilant inquiry, that one-third of Bengal lay unoccupied. Only the best lands in the Province were cultivated ; and the landholders, where they existed, had to treat their peasantry well ; for the compe-

tition was among the proprietors for tenants, and not among the tenants for land.

Under such conditions, the means of existence were easily raised, and the people had only to be protected from plunder and the sword in order to prosper. The establishment of British rule afforded that protection almost from the first; and by degrees, as the English conscience awoke more fully to its responsibilities in India, it has endeavoured to combat the other two ancient devastators, namely, pestilence and famine. No sooner does one of the old epidemics break out in a district than an army of doctors, native and European, marches forth to do battle with it; and the Government has set up as a great cinchona planter, in order to bring the cheap quinine alkaloids within reach of the people. Something has also been done, although much more remains to be accomplished, to mitigate the periodical famines which were formerly accepted as inevitable concomitants of the climate. One by one the old checks on an Asiatic population have been removed. I have just mentioned that a century ago one-third of Bengal lay unoccupied; but since then the population of Bengal has increased not by one-third, but threefold; and the area which had to feed twenty-one millions in 1780 has in 1880 to feed over sixty-three millions of mouths. After a minute comparison of rural India at present with the facts disclosed in the manuscript records, I am compelled to the conclusion that throughout large tracts the struggle for life is harder than it was when the country passed into our hands.

For not only have the British districts to support a much denser population than they had a century ago, but they have to feed a population nearly three times as dense as that in the Native States at the present day. Throughout all British India, the average population is 212 persons to the square mile; or, deducting the comparatively new and outlying provinces of British Burma and Assam, it is 243 persons to the square mile. The average population in Native or Feudatory India is, so far as we can discover, 89 persons to the square mile. Excluding, therefore, Assam on the eastern frontier, and Burma beyond the sea, each square mile of British India has to feed on an average nearly three times as many mouths as each

square mile of the Native States. How thick this population is may be realised from the fact that fertile France has only 180 people to the square mile; while even in crowded England, wherever the density approaches 200 to the square mile it ceases to be a rural population, and has to live by manufactures, mines, or city industries.

We speak of the poverty and the miserably small farms of the Irish peasant. Well, Ireland has, according to the last census, 169 persons to the square mile. But we can take thirteen districts of Northern India, equal in size to Ireland, which have to support an average of 680 persons to the square mile, or over one person to each acre. This calculation, it must be remembered, allows no deduction for swamps, wastes, and land incapable of tillage. The Famine Commissioners report that two-thirds of the whole farmers of Bengal have holdings of between two and three acres. If we allow four persons to each peasant family, we find twenty-four millions of human beings struggling to live off the produce of fifteen million acres, or just over half an acre apiece. The Indian soil cannot support that struggle.

We may object to sensational writing, but we cannot wonder that patriotic Englishmen who have never been in India, and who suddenly catch sight of the results of this state of things without a previous knowledge of the causes, should head their essays with such titles as 'Bleeding to Death.'

The above figures fail, indeed, to present the facts in their full significance. For Ireland, like the rest of Great Britain, has many cities and centres of manufacturing industry, while in India practically the whole people has to make its livelihood by the tillage of the land. Thus, in England and Wales 42 per cent., or nearly one-half of the population, dwell, according to the last census, in towns with upwards of 20,000 inhabitants; while in British India, under 5 per cent., or not one-twentieth, dwell in such towns. Ninety per cent. of the rural population have to live more or less entirely by the tillage of the soil. India, therefore, is almost exclusively a country of peasant farmers, and many of the so-called towns are merely groups of villages, in the midst of which the ploughman drives his cattle a-field, and all the operations of agriculture go on. Indeed,

the term 'municipality,' which in Europe is only applied to towns, means quite as often in India a collection of rural homesteads for the purposes of local government.

The increasing population has driven from the open country the larger sorts of wild beasts. It is also exhausting the waters of their fishes. About 80 per cent. of the natives are permitted by their caste rules to eat this kind of food—practically the only animal food available to the Indian husbandman. The price of fish has doubled, and for a time the fishing castes prospered greatly. In time, however, the enormously increased consumption began to tell. The fishermen plied their trade harder, and contracted the meshes of their nets till not a minnow could pass through them. The fishes in India never have a day's rest—no close season is allowed for breeding time, and even the spawn is gathered for food. The young fry, which would grow into large fish, are sold by jars-full, about two hundred being required to make a pound. They are caught by every device of human ingenuity—by traps, nets, baskets, weirs, poisoning, suffocation by cloths, and draining off the water from the streams, marshes, and ponds. In 1871 returns collected from all India disclosed an alarming decrease in this most important source of food supply. Almost everywhere the yield had ceased to be equal to the demand. In some parts the fishing castes had so exhausted the waters that many of them had to give up their hereditary trade and become tillers of the soil. In others, the people were eating frogs instead of fish, cooking them in the same way, and distinguishing between the comparative delicacy of the 'solitary,' 'green,' and 'spangled' species.

Another effect of the increased population is the growth of landless classes. The cultivated area no longer suffices to allow a plot of ground for every peasant, and vast multitudes now find themselves ousted from the soil. The census of 1872 returned seven and a-half million males in this category; or, allowing for women and children, about twenty-four millions. They earn a poor and precarious subsistence as hired labourers. Numbers of them go through their lives in a state of chronic hunger; they are the class whom a scarcity first attacks, and who supply the mass of the victims in a famine.



To the peasant farmer, the result of the increase in population is twofold : he gets a smaller return from the land for his labour, and he has to pay away a larger proportion of that smaller return to his landlord. For with the increase of population the peasantry had to fall back on inferior or less favourably situated soils. The fact that a third of a province lay waste might be an unfortunate, or even a discreditable fact for the Government, but it did not necessarily involve any hardship to the tiller of the soil. Only the best lands in a village, and only the best villages in a district, were cultivated. The rest were entered in the accounts of the Native Administration as 'unoccupied.' As the people multiplied under our rule, they had to bring into tillage these inferior lands, and so by degrees they have had to expend a larger amount of labour in order to raise the same quantity of food. As the increase of the population went on, they could no longer allow the soil any rest, and many thousands of acres have to produce two crops each year. Moreover, the surrounding jungle was gradually ploughed up, and the people had to fall back upon the cow-dung for fuel. In this way both the two great sources of manure were cut off—namely, the ashes from the wood which they formerly burned, and the ammonia and other volatile parts of the cow-dung which they now burn in place of timber.

Many careful observers believe, indeed, that the clearing and cultivation of the jungles have been carried to such an excess in some parts of India as to seriously alter the climate. For forests, and the undergrowth which they foster, not only husband the rainfall, but they appear to attract it. A hill covered with forest is a reservoir of moisture ; the same hill stripped of its woods becomes hard, arid ground, down whose bare surface the tropical rains rush off in destructive torrents, instead of sinking into the subsoil, or being stored up in the vegetation. It is alleged that the risk of drought and famine has increased in many parts of India from this cause ; and whereas the great object of the ancient native dynasties was to get the cultivators to clear the jungle, the British Government finds a costly Department necessary to conserve the forests which still remain.

The pasture grounds of the villages have also, to a large

extent, been brought under the plough, and the cattle in many districts have degenerated from insufficient food. The same number of oxen can no longer put the same amount of work into the soil. Terrible outbreaks of the cow epidemic and the foot-and-mouth disease sweep across Bengal, and some years ago necessitated the appointment of a Cattle Plague Commission. While, therefore, the husbandman has now to wring a subsistence out of inferior lands which he would not have touched a hundred years ago, the good lands have deteriorated for want of manure and from want of rest, and the cattle have degenerated from lack of pasture. This sad description does not apply, as I shall presently show, to all India, but it represents the state of things in large and increasing areas where the population has outgrown the food-producing powers of the land. It explains, and to some extent justifies, the mournful forebodings of those who warn us that our real danger in India is not any temporary insolvency of the finances, but a permanent bankruptcy of the soil.

Of the smaller crops which the husbandman thus extracts from the soil, he has to give a larger share to the landlord; for rent represents, fundamentally, the difference in value between the most profitable and the least profitable lands under cultivation. This is the economical theory, and, in spite of every effort at limitation by custom or law, the economical theory constantly tends to assert itself in the actual facts. As the peasantry in Bengal have been forced back upon the poorer lands, the natural rent of all the other lands has risen. A large and prosperous body of proprietors has grown up under our rule. Their prosperity has resulted partly from their own good management, but chiefly from the husbandmen having been forced by their growing numbers to bring into tillage the inferior lands, and from the natural increase of rent to which that process gives rise as regards the superior soils.

We may realise the revolution thus silently effected in the rural economy of India from two facts—an historical fact and a legal one. The historical fact is that when the English obtained Bengal in the last century they found two classes of tenants—the *thani* or 'stationary' husbandman, with occupancy rights in the soil, and the *paikasht* or floating rural population,

without such rights. At that time, so great was the surplus of land that the proprietors were glad to attract the floating population to their estates by giving them farms at lower rates than those paid by the stationary tenants. The latter had built their own homesteads, dug wells or tanks, and would submit to a higher rent rather than abandon their holdings, and lose the capital and labour invested in them. It thus resulted that rack rents—that is to say, the rents paid by tenants without leases or occupancy rights—were, in parts of Bengal, lower than the rents paid by tenants with occupancy rights. This state of things is now reversed. The ever-increasing rack rents exacted by the landlords from the tenants without leases or occupancy rights form the great complaint of the rural population, and one of the most difficult problems with which the Government has to deal.

The legal fact is that the enhancement of rent, which never came within the contemplation of the law-makers of the last century in Bengal, is now the vital question of legislation. Our first attempt to ascertain and define the land law of Bengal is embodied in the Cornwallis Code of 1793. The difficulty at that time was where to get tenants, not how to raise their rent. Enhancement finds no mention in the Code. So far as can be inferred from the spirit of its provisions, the Indian Legislature seems to have assumed that the proprietors were thenceforward to pay the same land tax for ever to the Government, and that the tenants were thenceforward to pay the same rates of rent for ever to the proprietors. But before the middle of the present century rents had been enhanced to such a degree as to threaten an agrarian deadlock. It was found absolutely necessary to revise the land law; and 1859, the year after the country passed under the Crown, is memorable in Bengal for the second great Land Code. Restraints upon the enhancement of rents form the most important features of this Land Code of 1859. But in spite of its provisions, the increase of the people and the natural operation of economic laws have led to a still further rise in rent. The peasantry resisted by every legal means, and in some parts combined to ruin the landlords by refusing to pay rent. Their attitude was in certain respects similar to the position of the Irish peasantry. The Indian

husbandman has, however, a power of pacific combination and of patient, passive resistance which the Irish cotters have not yet developed. The most peaceful district of Bengal, Pabna, was for some time in a state of agrarian revolt. But it was a revolt conducted, as a rule, according to the strict forms of law. With the exception of a few quite insignificant ebullitions, the husbandmen simply said : ' We shall not fight, but we shall not pay. We shall claim occupancy rights ; and every single rent which you landlords collect shall cost you a law suit. This we shall contest at each stage, from the institution of the plaint to the final order for selling us up, by every delay, appeal, and other weapon of chicanery known to the law. You will get your decree in the long run ; but in the meantime you will be ruined. For ourselves, we are as badly off as we can be, and it is better for us to sell our last cow to fight you in the courts than to pay your rent with it.' In Bengal, six millions, or two-thirds of the whole tenantry, pay rents of less than ten shillings a year. Among such a nation of small cultivators it is simply impossible to collect every petty rent by a law suit, and their combination really did mean ruin to many of the landlords. The Government, while it declared that it would maintain public order, counselled private concessions. Some sort of compromise was arrived at, and the Legislature obtained a breathing space to again consider the whole questions involved. The result is a new Land Code, the draft of which has just reached England. In this Code the most prominent question is again the enhancement of rent, and its provisions are more stringent than ever in favour of the tenant.

' Where the subdivision of land among tenants-at-will is extreme,' write the Famine Commissioners in 1880, ' and in a country where agriculture is almost the only possible employment for large classes of the people, the competition is so keen that rents can be forced up to a ruinous height, and men will crowd each other till the space left to each is barely sufficient to support a family.' If they relax their grasp on their holding, they sink into the landless classes.

Such is the state of things in Bengal, where landlordism and great proprietors chiefly prevail. But in other parts of India the British Government has retained the land in its own hands,

as it was kept by the previous native dynasties, and deals directly with the cultivators. The Government is the landlord itself, and it is necessary to see how it has behaved to its tenants. Bengal forms the most typical representative of the former system, and Madras is usually taken as the most typical representative of the latter. But even in Madras, the British rulers have made over a large part of their territory (paying about one-eighth of the land revenue) to private proprietors; and my remarks will be confined to the remaining seven-eighths, which remain in the hands of the Government. The population has here also increased, and the people have been forced back upon inferior soils. The figures have been worked out only for the past quarter of a century—that is, from 1853 to 1878. They show the following results. In 1853 the general population was estimated at twenty-two millions; in 1878, at thirty-one and a-half millions, showing an increase of 43 per cent., or nearly one-half. The cultivated land, held by husbandmen direct from the State, had increased from twelve to twenty millions of acres, or 66 per cent., exactly two-thirds. The area of tillage had, therefore, not only kept pace with the increase of population, but had extended at a rate of 50 per cent. more rapidly. This resulted partly from the fact that the inferior lands, now reclaimed, could not support so large an average of people as the superior lands which were already in cultivation at the commencement of the period. The Government recognised this, and has accordingly increased its rental only from three millions to three-and-four-fifth millions sterling; being only 26 per cent., or one-fourth, while the area of cultivation has increased by 66 per cent. The Government, in fact, has reduced its average rental over the total area of cultivation from 5*s.* an acre in 1853 to 3*s.* 10*d.* an acre in 1878, or over 23 per cent., say one-fourth. According to the ordinary theory of rent, rates should have risen enormously during that period; and they have risen enormously wherever the land is held by private proprietors. As regards the Madras Presidency, therefore, the facts may be recapitulated thus. During the twenty-five years the area of cultivation has increased by 66 per cent., or two-thirds; the population by 43 per cent., or nearly one-half; and the Government rental by only 26 per cent., or one-fourth; while the average rates of

rent per acre have been actually reduced by over 23 per cent., or nearly one-fourth, from 5*s.* an acre in 1853 to 3*s.* 10*d.* an acre in 1878. Instead of taking advantage of the increase of population to enhance the rental, the Madras Government has realised the fact that the increase in numbers means a harder struggle for life, and has reduced instead of enhancing, according to the economic laws of rent, the average rates throughout its domains.

But a crowded population of small cultivators, without capital and with no restraints on marriage, everywhere is, has been, and must be, poor. Remember that each Hindu marries as a religious duty, and that marriage takes place at the close of childhood, quite irrespective of there being any means of subsistence for the young couple. That is the root of the evil. In districts where the soil is poor, or the rainfall uncertain, the people have always had to depend upon village money-lenders for the capital necessary to feed them till the next harvest. Amid the tumults of native rule, the usurers lent comparatively small sums. If the peasant failed to pay, they could not evict him or sell his holding; because, among other reasons, there was more land than there were people to till it. The native Government, moreover, could not afford to lose a tenant. Accordingly the bankrupt peasant went on, year after year, paying as much interest as the money-lender could squeeze out of him; until the next Maratha invasion or Muhammadan rebellion swept away the whole generation of usurers, and so cleared up the account. Under our rule there is no chance of such relief for insolvent debtors; and our rigid enforcement of contracts, together with the increase of the population, has armed the creditor with powers formerly unknown. For the peasant's holding under the British Government has become a valuable property, and he can be readily sold out, as there are always plenty of husbandmen anxious to buy in. The result is two-fold. In the first place, the village banker lends larger sums, for the security is increased; and in the second place, he can push the peasantry to extremities by eviction, which was economically impossible under native rule.

In certain districts of Southern India the people are sometimes driven by misery to take the law into their own hands. They kill the village usurer, or burn down his house with his

account-books, and perhaps himself in it. But this offence, which was a common and venial one under native rule, now brings upon the perpetrators the inflexible arm of the British law. Of late years there has been an agrarian agitation in Southern India, similar in some respects to the agrarian agitation in Bengal. But in the south, where the Government as proprietor has granted peasant tenures, the revolt has been against the usurers, while in Bengal it has been against the landlords. In Southern India the demand is for legislative restraints on selling out the husbandman for debt; in Bengal it is for legislative restraints on the enhancement of his rent.

The sad result seems to be, that whether we give over the land to a proprietary class, as in Bengal, or keep it in our own hands, as in Southern India, the struggle for life grows harder to large sections of the people. But those sections, although numbered by millions, fortunately do not make up the whole population. Throughout wide tracts where land is still plentiful, the peace and security of British rule produce a permanent prosperity never before reached in India. I have tried to look with my own eyes into the condition of the tillers of the soil in almost every country of Europe, from Norway to the Black Sea, but I know of no peasantry so well off as the husbandmen in Eastern Bengal and many other parts of India. Vast trading classes have also been developed under our Government, who enjoy a degree of comfort which no considerable body of the people possessed when the country passed into our hands. But the comfortable classes, whether husbandmen or traders, keep silence. The uncomfortable classes very properly make themselves heard.

You now know what I mean by the poverty of the Indian people. More food is raised from the land than ever was raised before; but the population has increased at even a more rapid rate than the food supply. We are compelled to stand by and watch the pitiless operation of economic laws, whose force no man can stay. Those laws decree that a population of small husbandmen which marries and multiplies irrespective of the means of subsistence shall suffer a constantly increasing struggle for existence. But while it is important to clearly realise this evil, it is necessary to calmly gauge its proportions. Nothing is

more dangerous to a Government than ignorance, and few things are so terrifying as half-knowledge. However great may be the pressure upon certain classes of the people, India produces each harvest more food than she consumes. She exported during the last five years an average of over twenty-three million hundredweights of food-grains alone, capable of feeding her whole population for ten days, or an additional five and a-half millions of people for the entire year. This makes no allowance for the other edible seeds, oils, and condiments which she exports. We may put it in another way. During the past five years, India has sold an average of under eight millions worth of food-grains to other nations. This sum is rather more than equal to the balance of over seven millions sterling which she receives in cash for her exports ; after paying for all her imports, for the interest on money raised in England, and for all the home charges of the Government. With these eight millions sterling she could, if she pleased, pay for another twenty-three million cwts. of food. In either case we find that the Indian harvest produces a surplus equal to the whole consumpt of her population during ten days, or to the support of an extra five and a-half millions of people during an entire year.

It may, however, be alleged with some truth, that if the whole population ate as much as they could this surplus would not exist. The grain exports of India represent many hungry stomachs in India. On the one hand, it is incorrect to say that those exports of food are compulsory in order to pay for the English charges of the Government. For the value of the whole food exports of India only slightly exceeds the seven millions sterling which she yearly hoards in gold and silver, after paying for her imports, for interest on English capital, and for all home charges of the Government. Those expenses would be defrayed by her other exports, even if she did not send out a bag of grain from her harbours. On the other hand, if all the poorer classes in India ate two full meals every day, the surplus for export would be much less than at present. That surplus only proves that the yearly supply of food in India is greater than the effective demand for it.

There is, however, another way of approaching the question.



AN ATTEMPT TO SHOW THE FOOD-SUPPLY OF BRITISH INDIA

Province	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	X.	XI.	XII.
	Population	Total Area in sq. miles	Cultivated Area in sq. miles	Uncultivable and Waste	Area under Food Crops, in million acres	Total Produce of Food, in million tons	Produce of Food per Acre, in lbs.	Pressure of Pop. on whole Land, per sq. mile	Pressure of Pop. on Outwated Land, per sq. mile	Annual Food Supply per Person, in lbs.		
Bengal	*	60,738,217	156,286	†	85,000	†	806	388	715	634		
Assam	.	4,124,972	45,303	7,500	No returns	19,803	806	91	550	No returns		
N.W. Provinces	.	30,781,204	81,778	51,000	18,000?	35,391	813	376	824			
Oudh	.	11,224,095	24,213	35,000	30,000	42,010	635	163	508			
Punjab	.	17,611,498	107,010	30,000	40,000	43,320	470	83	307			
Central Provinces, φ	.	9,223,534	113,320 φ	10,156	No returns	No returns	369	126	220			
Berar	.	2,227,654	17,711	8,600	No returns	5	672	170	588			
Mysore	.	5,085,412	29,633	5,000	37,000	45,464	1,244	35	617	1,087		
British Burma	.	3,088,902	87,464	50,000	No returns	No returns	658	228	627			
Madras	.	31,385,820	138,856	30,000	8,000	12,000	415	132	—			
Bombay (parts of)**	—	—	50,000	—	—	—	—	—	—			

\* Cols. I, II, III, and x. are reproduced from Statement No. 1, Statistical Abstract relating to British India, presented to Parliament November 14, 1886.  
 † Cols. IV and V. are taken from the Report of the Indian Famine Commission, part II, pp. 76-77; Col. VI. gives the balance between them and Col. III.  
 ‡ Cols. VII, VIII, and IX. are taken from the Famine Commission Report, part II, pp. 71-75. For various reasons, Col. IX. will not work out exactly from Cols. VII. and VIII. and is simply reproduced from the F. C. Report.  
 § Col. XI. is worked from Cols. II. and IV.  
 ¶ Col. XII. is worked from Cols. II. and VIII.  
 \*\* The figures for the Central Provinces include the Native States attached to them.  
 †† I have returns for only 50,000 square miles, out of the total of 124,105 square miles in the Presidency of Bombay, with Sind. Nor are any returns available for Ajmere—area, 2,711 square miles; population, 396,869; or for Coorg—area, 1,672 square miles; population, 168,312. Total excluded British area, about 78,000 square miles; population, about seven millions. On the other hand, 28,112 square miles, and a population of 1,048,710, are included under the Central Provinces for the attached Native States.

I have taken all the provinces for which returns exist, and endeavoured to find out what amount of food they yield per head of the population. Our experience in famines shows that  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of grain a day, or say 450 lbs. per annum, will keep a working adult male in health. That allowance becomes a comfortable one if granted for a whole population of men, women, and children; supplemented as it is in the Indian homesteads by milk, oils, condiments, fruits, vegetables, and occasionally fish. From the statement on the preceding page, it will be seen that in every province for which returns exist the average produce of the local crops is over 600 lbs. per person, while 450 lbs. is the average required to maintain the people in health. The table does not include the acreage under other crops, which go to pay the rent. Even Burma, where the peasantry have enough and to spare, only consumes 507 lbs. per head. According to the Famine Commissioners, Burma raises a total of one and a-half million tons, or 1,087 lbs. per head. But, deducting exports, &c., she only consumes for ordinary purposes 700,000 tons, or 507 lbs. per head. This shows that one of the best-fed provinces in the world, where there is still more land than there are husbandmen to till it, and abundance of fish, cannot consume much more grain than the rate I have allowed of 450 lbs. per head.

If, therefore, the food supply of India were equally distributed, there would be plenty for all. But, owing to the pressure of the increasing population on the soil, and the extreme subdivision of holdings, it is not equally distributed. For example, of the sixty-three millions of Bengal, including the protected States, forty millions, as nearly as I can estimate, are well fed; ten millions suffer hunger when the harvest falls short; and thirteen millions are always badly off—in fact, do not know the feeling of a full stomach except in the mango season. An acre of food crops produces, under ordinary circumstances, from 600 to 900 lbs., or much more than is required to feed a man for a year. A Bengal peasant, holding five acres or upwards of land, is reckoned well off, for he can support an average family of four or five persons, and have enough over to pay his rent. But anything under two acres leaves a perilously small margin for a family of four persons. Half an

acre yields about 400 lbs. of food in Bengal, and less in other provinces; while the allowance for health and comfort is 450 lbs. per head, besides the rent, seed, and interest to the village money-lender. Now, there are twenty-four millions of people in Bengal, who live off fifteen millions of acres; and of these, not less than ten millions, with three millions of the worst-off among the landless classes, make up the thirteen millions of Bengal, who, notwithstanding the ample food supply of 634 lbs. per head, scarcely ever lose the sensation of hunger.

The ratio of the permanently hungry population is somewhat smaller in other provinces. Thus, while in Bengal two-thirds of the entire holdings pay less than 10*s.* of rent, and average about two and a-half acres, in Bombay only one-third of the holdings are under five acres, while in Madras one-half the entire holdings pay over 20*s.* rent at lower rates per acre than those current in Bengal. The pressure of the people on each square mile of Bengal is double the average pressure in Madras and Bombay (including Sind); the holdings are necessarily smaller, and the poverty is more intense. 'A square mile of land in England,' says Mr. Caird, 'highly cultivated, gives employment to 50 persons, in the proportion, 25 men, young and old, and 25 women and boys,' or at the rate of 51 acres to 4 persons. France, with its 180 persons to the square mile, is considered a densely peopled country, and ten acres of plough land would be reckoned a small holding. Well, there is not a single district in India with only 180 persons to the square mile which is not exceedingly well off; and not a Bengal peasant with ten acres to a family of ten persons who would not be regarded as a fortunate man. An acre of crop-land, under plough cultivation, suffices to keep a human being in comfort; but anything under half an acre means a struggle for life.

The extent of the evil may be thus stated. Two-fifths of the people of British India enjoy a prosperity unknown under native rule; other two-fifths earn a fair but diminishing subsistence; but the remaining fifth, or forty millions, go through life on insufficient food. It is these underfed forty millions who form the problem of over-population in India. The difficulty of solving it is intensified by the fact that in spite of the hard struggle for life their numbers rapidly increase. 'In ten years,'

says Mr. Caird, 'at the present rate of growth, there will be twenty millions more people to feed.'

It may help us to understand the precise dimensions of the problem if we express it in figures. Mr. Caird estimates that the Indian population increases at the rate of two millions per annum. If the lot of the people is to be really improved, additional supplies must be provided not only to feed these new mouths, but to furnish a more adequate diet for the already existing ones. This latter task means an annual increase of food sufficient to entirely feed at least half a million, or to double the rations of one million of the poorer classes. In this way the lot of ten millions of these classes would be ameliorated in the course of ten years; and the condition of the whole would be gradually improved in the course of a generation. The initial problem, therefore, is to increase the means of subsistence in India so as to annually feed two and a-half millions more people: two millions representing the actual increase in numbers, and the half million representing a double diet for at least a million of the poorer classes. But figures can only express one aspect of this great social problem. For after providing the additional means of subsistence, it is necessary, if it is to ameliorate the common lot, that it should reach the mouths which most urgently need it. The problem, therefore, is not only one of supply, but of distribution.

I do not, however, agree with those who think the problem insoluble. The permanent cure for over-population rests with the people themselves, and consists in those restraints upon marriage to which all nations of small husbandmen have sooner or later to submit. But we cannot wait till that compulsory lesson is learned, for meanwhile millions will perish. Over-population in India is the direct product of British rule. We have taken on ourselves the responsibility by removing the previous checks upon the increase of the people—checks which, however cruel, are the natural and inevitable ones in Asia, and which take the place of the prudential restraints practised by the peasant-farming races of Europe. We must now discharge that responsibility, and as our own civilised rule has created the difficulty, we must meet it by the resources of civilisation. These resources may lighten the pressure of the population on

the soil in three ways—first, by withdrawing large numbers to non-agricultural industries ; second, by distributing the pressure over new or under-populated tracts ; third, by increasing the produce of the existing area of cultivation.

In the first direction, something has already been achieved. The new industrial life of India described in the last chapter is already feeding millions of mouths, and before ten years are over it will feed many millions more. India can command the cheapest and most dexterous manufacturing labour in the world. England can supply the cheapest capital in the world. The household manufactures which were crushed by the co-operation of coal, labour, and capital in England are now being revived by the co-operation of coal, labour, and capital in India. I believe that we are there at the commencement of a period of manufacturing enterprise which will form an epoch in the history of commerce. We are also apparently on the eve of great mining enterprises. Apart from the gold of Southern India, from the tin, antimony, lead, and mineral oils of Burma ; we only await a process for profitably smelting iron with coal having 15 per cent. of ash in order to create a new industry. No one would have predicted in 1855 that our Indian exports would rise from twenty to close on seventy millions during twenty-five years ; and no wise man will now venture to predict the limits of the industrial development of India before the close of this century. But we may with safety assume that the commercial industries of India for export and home consumption will distribute, in wages to the labouring classes and in profits to the husbandman, a yearly increase of a million sterling. Now those classes can live well at the rate of 2*l.* a year, for old and young. A million sterling of increased wages and peasant-profits would therefore represent a comfortable subsistence for an annual increase of half a million of people.

In the second direction, also, something has been done to lighten the pressure of the people on the soil. The emigrants by sea are indeed few, averaging only 18,000 per annum. But there is a tendency for the people to spontaneously spread themselves out to the less thickly peopled districts. We have only had one census in India, and it will not be possible to gauge the extent of such movements till the next census in 1881.

From Column iv. of the table on page 149 it will be seen that a great balance exists of cultivable land not yet brought under the plough. This uncultivable land consists of two classes—of large blocks or even extensive tracts in sparsely peopled provinces such as Assam, the Punjab, and the central plateau; and of small patches of pasture, jungle, or reclaimable waste interspersed among the closely cultivated districts. The first class opens up a field for migration on a large scale. Hitherto such migrations, although carefully watched by Government, cannot be said to have been fostered by it. A labour transport department exists, but its object is to secure a high scale of comfort to the coolies *en route*, at the cost of the tea planters, rather than to encourage both capitalists and labourers in the work of transferring the population from the overcrowded to the under-peopled provinces. The Government is now reconsidering the question in the latter aspect. The transport of labour has, so far, only paid for undertakings yielding a high return, such as tea planting. That industry now employs 300,000 natives, and feeds about half a million, a large proportion of whom have been brought from densely inhabited tracts to the distant tea districts.

The problem before Government is how to render labour transport a paying enterprise for the staple operations of husbandry. It is conceivable that such facilities might be given as would make it profitable for capitalists and land companies to found agricultural settlements in Assam and the Central Provinces. If the landholders of Bengal were thus to turn captains of industry, they would vindicate their position and render it inexpugnable. Thus, among the most thickly peopled parts of India are Bardwan and Darbhanga, each of them held by a Maharaja. The incomes of these two magnates are popularly reckoned to make a total of over half a million sterling. Well, if the Maharaja of Bardwan and the Maharaja of Darbhanga were to obtain suitable facilities from the Government, and to lead forth a colony, each from his own crowded district, by ten days' easy journey to Assam or the Central Provinces, he would not only add to the fortunes of his house, but would set a noble example which other great proprietors in Bengal would not be slow to follow.

Such enterprises already yield a good profit on the hilly outskirts of Bengal and in marshy districts. Half a million of acres have been reclaimed by immigrant colonies in the Sundarbans during the present generation. From personal examination of these clearings, and of the reclaimed tracts in Assam, I am able to say that the task is a lighter one in the latter province. But it requires a capitalist, and above all a native capitalist. A *fakir*, or spiritual person, accompanies each party to pray against the tigers; and receives 1s. 3d. per 100 logs removed in safety. A simple ecclesiastical polity of this sort is found to give confidence and coherence to the immigrants. The Bengal landholder delights to trace his origin to some remote ancestor who came from the north and cut down the jungle. The eponymous village hero is still the man who dug the tank and ploughed up the adjacent fields. Well, the landed gentlemen of Bengal have now a chance of illustrating their families, not by a Brahman-invented pedigree, but by themselves doing what they love to think that their ancestors did—by founding agricultural colonies, and by giving their names to new districts.

The landholders of Bengal are the class which has profited by the increase of population which now forms the great difficulty of Bengal. Many of them have a high sense of their duties; many of them are at present apprehensive that their privileges will be curtailed. Whatever may be the legal basis for those privileges, they have no foundation in the sympathies of their countrymen; and there is a tendency to question that basis among Englishmen both in India and at home. If the great landholders could co-operate with the Government in equalising the pressure of the population on the soil, they would remove the principal cause which has led to their privileges being challenged. But Government should remember that, in such enterprises, the undertaker risks his capital, and the labourers must be content to risk their health. Hitherto the one object of our labour transport laws has been to reduce the labourer's risk at the cost of the capitalist. Fifteen years ago it was my duty to administer those laws in the principal seat of river embarkation for Assam. The Acts were framed in favour of the coolie, and I administered them, as I was bound to do, in favour of the coolie. At a later period I had to inquire into

the whole operation and spirit of these laws. I came to two conclusions—first, that labour transport was practicable in Bengal, not only for special industries like tea, but on a great scale for agricultural settlements; second, that if the system were to be re-organized on this new basis, Government must legislate with an eye to the money risks of the capitalist as well as to the health risks of the labourer.

The other class of unoccupied land consists not of large blocks, but of patches interspersed among closely cultivated districts. A glance at the table on page 149 will show how vast an aggregate must exist of this class. 'There is,' write the Famine Commissioners, 'in most villages scope for a slow and gradual extension of cultivation by the breaking-up of uncultivated land; and outside the village areas there is an immense extent which is more or less fit for cultivation.' How rapidly the process goes on may be realised from the fact that the Madras peasantry increased their cultivated fields from twelve to twenty millions of acres in the quarter of a century ending 1878. In truth, the process goes on too rapidly. For the cultivable waste comprises the pasture lands on which the village herds graze, and the patches of jungle on which the people depend for fuel. Now, as we have seen, the lack of pasture and the substitution of cow manure for firewood are main factors in the exhaustion of the Indian soil.

While, therefore, much may be done by migration to unoccupied tracts, and by the tillage of waste patches of land, the latter process drives us back upon the third means of augmenting the food-supply—namely, by increasing the produce of the existing area of cultivation. And here we are met at the outset by a statement often repeated, and which the *Hindu Patriot* lately put in very pithy words: 'The native cultivators have nothing to learn so far as non-scientific agriculture is concerned, and the adoption of scientific agriculture is wholly beyond their means.' I had the good fortune, in my youth, to work during two years in the laboratory of the greatest agricultural chemist of that day. If the only alternative lay between a strictly scientific and an altogether unscientific husbandry, I should have to concur in the *Hindu Patriot's* conclusion. But the choice is not thus limited. I have compared



the high farming of the Lothians with the primitive tillage of the Argyleshire glens, and I find that both these extremes are essentially local. The husbandry of England and of Europe occupies a shifting position between the two. One little improvement takes place in one district, another small change for the better in another. Everyone knows that strictly scientific farming trebles the produce; that a field which produces 730 lbs. of wheat without manure can be made to yield 2,342 lbs. by manure. But everyone also knows that the native of India has neither the capital nor the knowledge required to attain this result. If, therefore, the problem before him was to increase his crops threefold, I should despair of his success. But, as I shall now show, the problem is not to increase the food supply of India by 300 per cent. at a stroke, but by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. a year.

Wheat land in the North-Western Provinces, which now gives only 840 lbs. an acre, yielded 1,140 lbs. in the time of Akbar, and would be made to produce 1,800 lbs. in East Norfolk. The average return of food-grains in India shows about 700 lbs. per acre; in England, wheat averages over 1,700 lbs. The Secretary to the Government of India, in its late Department of Agriculture, declares, 'that with proper manuring and proper tillage, every acre, broadly speaking, of land in the country can be made to yield 30, 50, or 70 per cent. more of every kind of crop than it at present produces; and with a fully corresponding increase in the profits of cultivation.' But, as I shall now show, a yearly increase of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. would suffice.

The food supply of India must be augmented so as to allow an annual increase of two and a-half millions of people. This rate will not only feed the new mouths, but will ameliorate the condition of the existing population. Now two and a-half millions are less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the present population, and the present food supply is more than that population consumes. If, therefore, we add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. yearly to the food production, the supply will more than keep pace with the increased demand upon it, so far as the internal wants of India are concerned. I shall specify four out of many considerations which make me believe that, without attempting any flights in

scientific farming, it is possible to steadily increase the Indian food supply to the extent of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum.

The first impediment to better husbandry is the fewness and weakness of the cattle. 'Over a great portion of the Empire,' writes the Secretary to the late Agricultural Department in India, 'the mass of the cattle are starved for six weeks every year. The hot winds roar, every green thing has disappeared, no hot-weather forage is grown; the last year's fodder has generally been consumed in keeping the well bullocks on their legs during the irrigation of the spring crops; and all the husbandman can do is just to keep his poor brutes alive on the chopped leaves of the few trees and shrubs he has access to, the roots of grass and herbs that he digs out of the edges of fields, and the like. In good years he just succeeds; in bad years the weakly ones die of starvation. But then come the rains. Within the week, as though by magic, the burning sands are carpeted with rank, luscious herbage, the cattle *will* eat and over-eat, and millions die of one form or other of cattle disease, springing out of this starvation followed by sudden repletion with rank, juicy, immature herbage.' He estimates 'the average annual loss of cattle in India by preventable diseases' at ten million beasts, worth seven million sterling. He complains that no real attempt has been made either to bring veterinary knowledge within reach of the people, or to organize a system of village plantation which would feed their cattle through the summer.

The second impediment to improved husbandry is the want of manure. If there were more stock, there would be more manure, and the absence of firewood compels the people to use even the scanty droppings of their existing cattle for fuel. Under such circumstances agriculture ceases to be the manufacture of food, and becomes a mere spoliation of the soil. Forage crops, such as lucerne, guinea-grass, and the great stemmed millets, might furnish an immense weight to the acre. Government is now considering whether their cultivation could not be promoted by reducing the irrigation rates on green fodder crops. A system of village plantations would not only supply firewood, but would yield leaves and an undergrowth of fodder sufficient to tide the cattle over their six weeks' struggle for life

each summer. In some districts Government has land of its own which it could thus plant ; in others it is only a sleeping partner in the soil. The system would have to be considerably organized on a legislative basis, but Mr. Hume, the highest authority on such a subject, declares the system perfectly practicable. For the details I refer the reader to his valuable pamphlet on 'Agricultural Reform in India.' In Switzerland, I found that the occupiers of *allmends*, or communal lands, have at least in some cantons to keep up a certain number of trees. It seems a fair question whether plantations ought not in many parts of India to be now made an incident of the land tenure ; they would go far to solve the two fundamental difficulties of Indian agriculture—the loss of cattle, and the want of manure.

Meanwhile, the natives set an increasing value on manure. The great cities are being converted from centres of disease into sources of food supply. For a time, caste prejudices stood in the way of utilising the night-soil. 'Five years ago,' writes the Secretary to the Poona Municipality, 'agriculturists would not touch the *poudrette* when prepared, and could not be induced to take it away at even a nominal charge. At present the out-turn of manure is not enough to keep pace with the demand, and the peasants buy it up from four to six months in advance.' At Amritsar, in the Punjab, 30,000 donkey loads were sold in one year. A great margin stills exists for economy, both in the towns and villages ; but the husbandman is becoming more alive to the utilisation of every source of manure, and his prejudices are gradually giving way under the stern pressure of facts.

The third impediment to improved agriculture in India is the want of water. Mr. Caird, the chief English authority who has inquired into the subject, believes that if only one-third of the cultivated area were irrigated India would be secure against famine. At any rate, an extension of irrigation would alone suffice to raise the food supply by more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. during many years. Since India passed to the Crown, great progress has been made in this direction. Money has been invested by millions of pounds ; 200 millions of acres are now under cultivation ; and in the five British provinces which require it most 28 per cent. of the area, or say one-third, is

artificially supplied with water. Those Provinces are the Punjab, the North-West, Oudh, Sind, and Madras. Looking to what has of late years been done, and to what yet remains to be done by wells and petty works with the aid of loans from the State, I think we may reckon on a vast increase of food from irrigation.

I shall mention only one more means of improving Indian tillage. The Indian Government is the greatest landed proprietor in the world ; it is, I think, the only Government of a people of husbandmen which has no Agricultural Department. From the first, it concentrated its attention on its own share of the crops, and interested itself too little in their cultivation. Ten years ago Lord Mayo, the only Indian Viceroy who had ever farmed for a livelihood, founded an Agricultural Department in India. But the traditions of Indian administration were too strong for him. His Agricultural Department soon became a Revenue Department, and before long was abolished. I do not think that any official *deus ex machinâ* can bring down an *avatar* of steam ploughs and chemical manures upon India. But I watched the operations of the late Agricultural Department, and I have studied the practical work done at its model farms. I believe it capable, by continuous effort, of slowly but surely effecting great improvements in Indian husbandry. Food production depends on three elements—labour, land, and capital. We have abundance of labour in India : there is still enough land if the population could be equally distributed over it ; and the Government has unlimited cheap capital at its command, if it had only the knowledge and supervision requisite for its safe application to the soil. India has entered on the inevitable change which takes place in all countries from 'extensive' to 'intensive' husbandry, as the population increases. It has been my duty to find out precisely what amount of information exists with regard to the agriculture of India ; and to compare that information with the facts which the Governments of Europe and America supply on the same points. I have come to the conclusion that no central Government stands more in need of agricultural knowledge than the Government of India, and that no Government has a smaller stock of such knowledge within its central body.

I rejoice, therefore, that the Famine Commissioners urge the re-establishment of an Agricultural Department in India.

I have now set forth the problem of an increased food supply for India ; endeavoured to state its exact dimensions ; and shown that, while it demands organized efforts on a great scale, it is quite capable of solution. The problem, however, is not only one of supply, but of distribution. By one set of efforts the food must be increased ; another set of efforts must secure a fair share of that food to the actual tiller of the soil. In Southern India, as I have mentioned, the cry of the peasantry is for protection against the money-lenders. After a careful inquiry, the Government determined to respond to that cry. It has practically said to the village bankers : ' A state of things has grown up under British rule which enables you to push the cultivators, by means of our courts, to extremities unknown under the native dynasties and repugnant to the customs of India. Henceforth, in considering the security on which you lend money, please to know that the peasant cannot be imprisoned or sold out of his farm to satisfy your claims ; and we shall free him from the lifelong burden of those claims by a mild bankruptcy law.' Such is the gist of the Southern India Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879.

It provides, in the first place, for small rural debtors of 5*l.* and under. If the court is satisfied that such a debtor is really unable to pay the whole sum, it may direct the payment of such portion as it considers that he can pay, and grant him a discharge for the balance. To debtors for larger amounts, it gives the protection of an Insolvency Act. No agriculturist shall henceforth be arrested or imprisoned in execution of a decree for money. In addition to the old provisions against the sale of the necessary implements of his trade, no agriculturist's immovable property shall be attached or sold in execution of any decree, unless it has been specifically mortgaged for the debt to which such decree relates. But even when it has been specifically mortgaged the court may order the debtor's holding to be cultivated, for a period not exceeding seven years, on behalf of the creditor, after allowing a sufficient portion of it for the support of the debtor and his family. At the end of the seven years the debtor is discharged. If the debtor himself

applies for relief under the Insolvency clauses, the procedure is as follows: his movable property, less the implements of his trade, is liable to sale for his debts. His immovable property, or farm, is divided into two parts, one of which is set aside as 'required for the support of the insolvent and members of his family dependent on him,' while the remainder is to be managed on behalf of his creditors. But 'nothing in this section shall authorise the court to take into possession any houses or other buildings belonging to, and occupied by, an agriculturist.' Village arbitrators or 'conciliators' are appointed by the same Act, and every creditor must first try to settle his claims before them. If the effort at arbitration fails, the 'conciliator' shall give the applicant a certificate to that effect. No suit to which an agriculturist (residing within any local area to which a 'conciliator' has been appointed) is a party shall be entertained by any Civil Court, unless the plaintiff produces a certificate from the 'conciliator' that arbitration has been attempted and failed.

Much may be said on general principles against this Act, and much also may be said for it under the special conditions in which the South Indian peasant now finds himself placed. On the one hand, it gives a protection to the ignorant cultivator such as he practically enjoyed under native rule, when the money-lender could not sell his holding, because there was more land than there were husbandmen to till it. But, on the other hand, it increases the risks in the application of capital to land. It secures the idle or extravagant cultivator from the consequence of his own acts, and thus tends to arrest that process of riddling out the thriftless members of the population which, however cruel in its action, results in bringing the soil into the hands able to make the most of it.

While in Southern India the demand is thus for restraints upon the money-lender, in Bengal the cry of the peasantry is for protection against the landlord. Accordingly, in 1859, the Government practically said to the landholders: 'We created you as a proprietary body in 1793 by our own act. In doing so, we made over to you valuable rights which up to that time were vested in the State, but we carefully reserved the rights of the cultivators. We shall now ascertain and

define the rights of the cultivators; and we shall settle your relations with them on the basis of those rights.' The result was embodied in the famous Land Law of 1859, which divided the cultivators of Bengal into four classes: First, those who had held their holdings at the same rates since 1793, and whose rents could not be raised at all. Second, those who had held their land at the same rent for twenty years, and were therefore presumed by law to have held since 1793, unless the contrary was proved. Third, those who had held for twelve years. Such tenants had a right of occupancy, and their rents could be raised only for certain specified reasons by a suit at law. Fourth, those who had held for less than twelve years, and were left to make what bargain they could with the landlords.

Further experience, since 1859, has taught the Government that even these provisions are inadequate to avert the wholesale enhancement of rents in Bengal. It accordingly issued a Commission in 1879 to inquire into the questions involved, and the report of the Commission has just reached England. Whatever may be the fate of the draft law which these folios propose, they will remain a monument of noble intention, able discussion of principles, and honest statement of the facts. The Commissioners of 1879, like the legislators of 1859, have arrived at the conclusion that a substantial peasant right in the soil exists in Bengal. They would confirm all the rights given to the peasant by the Land Code of 1859, and they propose to augment them. The first class of cultivators, who have held their land at the same rates since 1793, can never have their rent raised. The second class, or those who have thus held for twenty years, are still presumed to have held since 1793. The third class of cultivators, who have held for twelve years, have their privileges increased. Their occupancy rights are to be consolidated into a valuable peasant tenure, transferable by sale, gift, or inheritance; and it is proposed that all increase in the value of the land or the crop, not arising from the agency of either the landlord or tenant, shall henceforth be divided equally between them. This provision is a very important one in a country like Bengal, where new railways, new roads, and the increase of the people and of trade, constantly tend to raise the price of the agricultural staples.

What political economists call the 'unearned increment' is no longer to accrue to the proprietor, but is to be divided between him and the cultivator; so that landlord and tenant are henceforth to be joint sharers in the increasing value of the land.

But the great changes proposed by the Rent Commissioners of 1879 refer to the fourth or lowest class of husbandmen, who have held for less than twelve years, and whom the Land Code of 1859 admitted to no rights whatever. The Commissioners declare that the competition for land, if unchecked by law or custom, will reduce 'the whole agricultural population to a condition of misery and degradation'; and they have resolved, so far as in them lies, to arrest this slow ruin of Bengal. They enunciate the principle that 'the land of a country belongs to the people of a country; and while vested rights should be treated with all possible tenderness, no mode of appropriation and cultivation should be permanently allowed by the ruler which involves the wretchedness of the great majority of the community; if the alteration or amendment of the law relating to land can by itself, or in conjunction with other measures, obviate or remedy the misfortune.'

Strong doctrine this; and very stringently do the Commissioners apply it. In their draft code, they propose a system of compensation for disturbance whose thoroughgoing character contrasts strongly with the mild Irish Bill which the House of Lords rejected last session. The Bengal Rent Commissioners would accord a quasi-occupancy right to all tenants who have held for three years. If the landlord demands an increased rent from such a tenant, and the tenant prefers to leave rather than submit to the enhancement, then the landlord must pay him, first, a substantial compensation for disturbance, and, second, a substantial compensation for improvements. The compensation for disturbance is calculated at a sum equal to one year's increased rent, as demanded by the landlord. The compensation for improvements includes payment for buildings erected by the tenant, for tanks, wells, irrigation works, drainage works, embankments, or for the renewal or improvement of any of the foregoing; also for any land which the tenant may have reclaimed or enclosed, and for all fruit trees which he may have planted. The operation of these clauses will be, that before



the landlord can raise the rent, he must be prepared to pay to the outgoing tenant a sum which will swallow up the increased rental for several years.

The practical result is to give tenant right to all cultivators who have held their land for three years or upwards—that is, to the mass of the people in Bengal. Whether these stringent provisions become law remains to be seen. For we must remember that the landlords have rights as well as the tenants. But before the Commissioners' suggestions can become law they they must obtain the assent, successively, of the Provincial Government of Bengal, of the Governor-General in Council, of the Indian Legislature, and finally of the Secretary of State who represents the majority in the British Parliament. At each of these stages the vested rights of the landholders will be carefully considered, and the arguments on which the proposed changes are based will be threshed out.

While the efforts of the Indian executive are directed to the increase of the food supply, the Legislature is thus endeavouring to secure a fair share of that supply to the tiller of the soil.

The analogy of the situation in Bengal to the agrarian agitation in Ireland is in some respects a striking one. In both countries, a state of things has grown up under British rule which seems unbearable to a section of the people. In Bengal, the peasantry have fought by every weapon of delay afforded by the courts; in England, the Irish representatives are fighting by every form of obstruction possible in Parliament. In both countries we may disapprove of the weapons employed; but in both we must admit that these weapons are better than the ruder ones of physical force. In neither can the Government parley with outrage or crime. In both countries, I believe that the peasantry will more or less completely win the day; for in both, the state of things of which they complain is repugnant to the awakened conscience of the British nation. But the analogy, although striking, must not be pushed too far. For, on the one hand, the Irish peasantry has emigration open to it—a resource practically not available to the Bengal husbandman. On the other hand, the proprietary right in Bengal was a gift of our own as late as 1793—a gift hedged in by reservations in favour of the peasantry, and

conferred for the distinctly expressed purpose of securing the welfare of the people. The proprietary right in Ireland is the growth of centuries of spoliation and conquest. It may, perhaps, be found possible to accord a secure position to the peasantry of Bengal without injustice to the landlords. The Irish difficulty, although on a smaller scale, is complicated by old wrongs.

One comfort we may derive from our experience in Bengal. It is, that the land laws, if rightly dealt with, form an ordinary and a necessary subject for legislative improvement in countries like India and Ireland, where the mass of the people live by the tillage of the soil. The reform of the existing tenures is, therefore, a matter for legislation, not for revolution. The problem, alike in India and in Ireland, is how to do the best for the peasant at the least cost to the State, and with the least infringement of vested proprietary rights.

## IV

THE MAINTENANCE OF A GOVERNMENT ON EUROPEAN  
STANDARDS OF EFFICIENCY FROM AN ASIATIC SCALE  
OF REVENUE

I HAVE endeavoured to explain the real meaning of the poverty of the Indian people. I shall now ask attention to some of the difficulties which that poverty gives rise to in the government of the country. Men must first have enough to live upon before they can pay taxes. The revenue-yielding powers of a nation are regulated, not by its numbers, but by the margin between its national earnings and its requirements for subsistence. It is because this margin is so great in England that the English are the most taxable people in the world. It is because this margin is so small in India that any increase in the revenue involves serious difficulties. The thirty-four millions of our countrymen in Great Britain and Ireland pay their 68 millions sterling of Imperial taxation<sup>1</sup> with far greater ease than the one hundred and ninety millions of British subjects in India pay an actual taxation of 35 millions. It may seem a contradiction in terms to say that the English who pay at the rate of forty shillings per head to the imperial exchequer, besides many local burdens, are more lightly taxed than the Indians, who pay only at the rate of 3*s.* 8*d.* per head to the imperial exchequer, with scarcely any local burdens. But the sum of forty shillings per head bears a much smaller proportion to the margin between the national earnings and the national requirements for subsistence in England than the sum of 3*s.* 8*d.* bears to that margin in India. In estimating the revenue-yielding powers of India

<sup>1</sup> Customs, 20 millions; Inland revenue, 48 millions: total taxation, 68 millions. The *gross* revenue of the United Kingdom in 1880 was 81,265,055*l.* besides 29,247,595*l.* of local taxation; total, 110,512,650*l.*

we must get rid of the delusive influence which hundreds of millions of taxpayers exercise upon the imagination. We must think less of the numbers and more of the poverty of the Indian people.

But while anxious that the gravity of our financial situation in India should be realised, I do not think that any good can come of exaggerating it. At this moment we are taking less taxation from the Indian people than was taken by their own Asiatic rulers. The following table (p. 169) shows the revenues of the Mughal Empire from the reign of Akbar in 1593 to its practical downfall in 1761. The figures are derived from many independent sources—from returns drawn up by skilful English officers of the East India Company; from the materials afforded by the Native Revenue Survey, and the Mughal exchequer accounts; from the reports of European travellers; and from the financial statement of the Empire as presented to the Afghan conqueror, Ahmad Shah Abdali, on his entry into Delhi. One of the most learned numismatists of our day, Mr. Edward Thomas, has devoted a treatise to sifting these materials, and I reproduce his results. Indeed, the difficulty of a comparison has arisen, not from the absence of information in respect to the Mughal revenues, but from want of exact statements regarding our own. As I pointed out at Birmingham in 1879, the Parliamentary Indian Accounts are rendered in such a form as to permit of the widest assertions regarding Indian taxation, varying from an annual total of 34 to over 60 millions sterling. Efforts have since then been made to remedy this, and a statement lately presented to Parliament exhibits the actual revenue and expenditure of British India during a series of years.

From this authoritative statement I find that the taxation of British India, during the ten years ending 1879, has averaged  $35\frac{1}{2}$  millions per annum. That is the gross sum, as shown in the table on next page; the net would be less; say for purposes of easy recollection 35 millions sterling, or 3s. 8d. per head. From the table on next page we see that in 1593, when the Mughal Empire was of much less extent and much less populous than our own, the burdens of the people amounted, under Akbar, to 42 millions sterling. Captain Hawkins, from careful inquiries at Agra, returned the revenue of Akbar's successor in

REVENUES OF THE MUGHAL EMPERORS AT THIRTEEN VARIOUS PERIODS FROM 1593 TO 1761,<sup>1</sup>  
FROM A SMALLER AREA AND POPULATION THAN THOSE OF BRITISH INDIA

	Mughal Emperors	Authority	Land Revenue	Revenue from all Sources
1	Akbar, A.D. 1593 . . . . .	Nizam-ud-din: not for all India Allowance for Provincial Troops ( <i>bami</i> ) <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	£ — —	£ 32,000,000 10,000,000 <sup>2</sup>
2	" 1594 . . . . .	Abul Fazl MSS.: not for all India	net 16,574,388	net £42,000,000
3	" " 1605 . . . . .	Official documents: not for all India	net 16,582,440	—
4	" " 1609-11 . . . . .	Indian authorities quoted by De Lâet	net 17,450,000	—
5	Jahangir, 1609-11 . . . . .	Captain Hawkins . . . . .	—	—
6	" " 1628 . . . . .	Abdul Hamid Lahori . . . . .	net 17,500,000	net 50,000,000
7	Shah Jahan, 1648-9 . . . . .	" . . . . .	net 22,000,000	—
8	Aurangzeb, 1655 . . . . .	Official documents . . . . .	gross 26,743,970	—
9	" " 1670? . . . . .	Later official documents	net 24,056,114	—
10	" " 1695 . . . . .	Gemelli Careri . . . . .	gross 35,641,431	—
11	" " 1697 . . . . .	Mannucci (Oatrou) . . . . .	net 34,505,890	net 80,000,000
12	" " 1707 . . . . .	Ramusis . . . . .	net 38,719,400	net 77,438,800
13	Shah Alam, 1761 . . . . .	Official statement presented to Ahmad Shah Abdali on his entering Delhi . . . . .	net 30,179,692	—
			net 34,506,640	—

<sup>1</sup> The above Table is reproduced from Mr. Edward Thomas's *Revenue Resources of the Mughal Empire*, published in 1871, and has been revised by him from materials which he has collected since that date.

<sup>2</sup> This is the lowest estimate at which the *Bunt* or Landwehr, in contradistinction to the Royal Army, can be reckoned.—Mr. Thomas's *Revenue Resources of the Mughal Empire*, p. 12. I insert the words 'net' and 'gross' by his direction.

1609 at 50 millions. At the end of that century we have two separate returns for 1695 and 1697, giving the revenues of Aurangzeb respectively at 80 and 77½ millions.

If we examine the items in the Mughal accounts, we find the explanation of their enormous totals. The land tax then, as now, formed about one half of the whole revenue. The net land revenue demand of the Mughal Empire averaged 25 millions sterling from 1593 to 1761; or 32 millions during the last century of that Empire, from 1655 to 1761. The annual *net* land revenue raised from the much larger area of British India during the ten years ending 1879 has been 18 millions sterling (*gross*, 21 millions). But besides the land revenue there were under our predecessors not less than forty imposts of a personal character. They included taxes upon religious assemblies, upon trees, upon marriage, upon the peasant's hearth, and upon his cattle. How severe some of them were may be judged from the Poll Tax. For the purposes of this tax, the non-Muhammadan population was divided into three classes, paying respectively 4*l.*, 2*l.*, and 1*l.* annually to the exchequer for each adult male. The lowest of these rates, if now levied from each non-Musalman male adult, would alone yield an amount exceeding our whole Indian taxation. Yet under the Mughal Empire the Poll Tax was only one of forty burdens.

We may briefly sum up the results as follows. Under the Mughal Empire from 1593 to 1761, the Imperial demand averaged about 60 millions sterling a year. During the past ten years ending 1879 the imperial taxation of British India, with its far larger population, averaged 35 millions. Under the Mughal Empire, the land tax between 1655 and 1761 averaged 32 millions. Under the British Empire, the net land tax has, during the past ten years, averaged 18 millions.

Not only is the taxation of British India much less than that raised by the Mughal Emperors, but it compares favourably with the taxation of other Asiatic countries in our own days. The only other Empire in Asia which pretends to a civilised government is Japan. I have no special acquaintance with the Japanese revenues; but I find from German writers that over 11 millions sterling are there raised from a population of thirty-four million people, or deducting certain items, a taxation of

GROSS TAXATION OF BRITISH INDIA

	1869-70	1870-71	1871-72	1872-73	1873-74	1874-75	1875-76	1876-77	1877-78	1878-79
Land revenue . . . . .	£ 21,088,019	20,622,823	20,520,337	21,348,669	21,037,912	21,296,793	21,503,742	19,857,152	19,869,667	22,330,586
Excise . . . . .	2,253,655	2,374,465	2,369,109	2,323,788	2,286,637	2,346,143	2,493,232	2,523,045	2,457,075	2,619,349
Assessed taxes . . . . .	1,110,224	2,072,025	825,241	580,139	20,136	2,747	510	310	86,110	900,920
Provincial rates . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	238,504	2,638,835
Customs . . . . .	2,429,185	2,610,789	2,575,990	2,653,890	2,628,495	2,678,479	2,721,389	2,483,345	2,622,296	2,326,561
Salt . . . . .	5,888,707	6,106,280	5,966,595	6,165,630	6,150,662	6,227,301	6,244,415	6,304,658	6,460,082	6,941,120
Stamps . . . . .	2,379,316	2,510,316	2,476,333	2,608,512	2,699,936	2,758,042	2,835,368	2,838,628	2,993,483	3,110,540
Total . . . . .	£ 35,149,106	36,296,698	34,733,605	35,680,628	34,823,778	35,309,505	35,798,656	34,007,138	34,727,217	40,867,911

Total for ten years ending 1879 . . . . .	£ 357,394,242
Deduct refunds, drawbacks, and adjusting payments, as per Parliamentary Statement . . . . .	4,379,234
Taxation for ten years ending 1879 . . . . .	<u>£ 353,015,008</u>
Yearly average . . . . .	35,301,100

about 6*s.* a head. In India, where we try to govern on a higher standard of efficiency, the rate of actual taxation is 3*s.* 8*d.* a head.

If, instead of dealing with the imperial revenues as a whole, we concentrate our survey on any one Province, we find these facts brought out in a still stronger light. To take a single instance. After a patient scrutiny of the records, I found that, allowing for the change in the value of money, the ancient revenue of Orissa represented eight times the quantity of the staple food which our own revenue now represents.<sup>1</sup> The native revenue of Orissa supported a magnificent Court with a crowded seraglio, swarms of priests, a large army, and a costly public worship. Under our rule, Orissa does little more than defray the local cost of protecting person and property, and of its irrigation works. In Orissa, the Raja's share of the crops amounted, with dues, to 60 per cent., and the mildest Native Governments demanded 33 per cent. The Famine Commissioners estimate the land tax in the British Provinces 'at from 3 per cent. to 7 per cent. of the gross out-turn.' Ample deductions are allowed for the cost of cultivation, the risks of the season, the maintenance of the husbandman and his family. Of the balance which remains, Government nominally takes one-half; but how small a proportion this bears to the crop may be seen from the returns collected by the Famine Commissioners. Their figures deal with 176 out of the 191 millions of our Indian fellow-subjects. These 176 millions cultivate 188 millions of acres, grow 331 millions sterling worth of produce, and now pay 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions of land revenue. While, therefore, they raise over 1*l.* 15*s.* worth of produce per acre, they pay to Government under 2*s.* of land tax per acre. Instead of thus paying 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. as they do to us, they would under the Mughal rule have been called to pay from 33 to 50 per cent. of the crop. The two systems, indeed, proceed upon entirely different principles. The Native Governments, write the Famine Commissioners, often taxed the land 'to the extent of taking from the occupier the whole of the surplus' 'after defraying the expenses of cultivation.' The British Government objects to thus 'sweeping off the whole margin of profit.'

<sup>1</sup> The evidence on which these statements are based was published in my *Orissa*, vol. i. pp. 323-329. Smith, Elder & Co. 1872.



What becomes of the surplus which our Government declines to take? It goes to feed an enormously increased population. The tax-gatherer now leaves so large a margin to the husbandman that the province of Bengal, for example, feeds three times as many mouths as it did in 1780, and has a vast surplus of produce, over and above its own wants, for exportation. 'In the majority of Native Governments,' writes the greatest living authority on the question,<sup>1</sup> 'the revenue officer takes all he can get; and would take treble the revenue we should assess, if he were strong enough to exact it. In ill-managed States the cultivators are relentlessly squeezed: the difference between the native system and ours being, mainly, that the cultivator in a native State is seldom or never sold up, and that he is usually treated much as a good bullock is treated—i.e. he is left with enough to feed and clothe him and his family, so that they may continue to work.' John Stuart Mill studied the condition of the Indian people more deeply than any other political economist, and he took an indulgent view of native institutions. His verdict upon the Mughal Government is that, 'except during the occasional accident of a humane and vigorous local administrator, the exactions had no practical limit but the inability of the peasant to pay more.'

Throughout British India the landed classes pay revenue at the rate of 5*s.* 6*d.* per head, including the land tax for their farms, or 1*s.* 9*d.* without it. The trading classes pay 3*s.* 3*d.* per head; the artisans, 2*s.*—equal to four days' wages in the year; and the agricultural labourers, 1*s.* 8*d.* The whole taxation, including the Government rent for the land, averaged, as we have seen, 3*s.* 8*d.* per head during the ten years ending 1879. But the Famine Commissioners declare that 'any native of India who does not trade or own land, and who chooses to drink no spirituous liquor, and to use no English cloth or iron, need pay in taxation only about sevenpence a year on account of the salt he consumes. On a family of three persons, the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Alfred Lyall, C.B. (Sir Alfred Lyall, K.C.B., G.C.I.E.), formerly Governor-General's Agent in Rajputana, and now Foreign Secretary to the Government of India; quoted in the Despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secretary of State, June 8, 1880. 'Condition of India,' Blue Book, pp. 36-37.

charge amounts to 1*s.* 9*d.*, or about four days' wages of a labouring man and his wife.'

The weak point of our financial position in India is not that we take more from the people than their native rulers did, but that what we take barely suffices for the cost of our administration. Each petty provincial prince under the Mughal Empire spent as much on his personal pomp and luxury, as now suffices for all the expense of the British Viceroy of India and his Council. But our Government, although less magnificent, rests upon a more costly basis. For the treasures, which under the Mughal dynasties were concentrated upon the palaces and harems of the rulers, are by us scattered broadcast in securing protection to the ruled. No previous Government of India ever kept up an army on such a scale of efficiency as to render invasion and piratical devastation impossible from without, and to absolutely put down internecine wars and the predatory nations within. Those invasions and depredations ruined thousands of homesteads every year. But the idea of such an army, paid like ours from the imperial exchequer, would have been dismissed as an impossible dream by the most powerful of the Mughal Emperors. Well, we keep up such an army, and it does its work at an average cost of 1*s.* 8*d.* a head of the Indian population. This may seem a moderate sum. It is not one-twentieth part of the 40*s.* per head paid by the population of the United Kingdom; but it represents nearly one-half of the whole actual taxation which we take from the Indian people. No native dynasty ever attempted to develop the resources of India by a network of communications. Some of the emperors constructed great military highways, but the idea of systematically opening out every district of India by commercial trade routes, by roads, railways, and navigable canals, is a purely British idea. The outlay will reimburse the Indian taxpayer a hundredfold, but meanwhile the railways alone have saddled him with a debt of 120 millions sterling; while many public works are profitable rather by their indirect consequences on trade or agriculture than by any direct yield to the revenues.

No Mughal Emperor ever mapped out India for judicial purposes, assigning to each small district a court of justice maintained from the imperial exchequer. The district records

show that when we obtained the country the people had simply to settle their disputes among themselves ; which the landholders did very profitably by bands of *lathials* or club-men, and the peasantry with the aid of trial by ordeal, the divining rod, and boiling oil. Where a law officer existed in the rural districts, he was not a salaried judge drawing his monthly pay from the Treasury and watched by superior courts, but a mere seller of decisions dependent for his livelihood on the payments of the litigants. The police of the Mughal Empire were an undisciplined, half-starved soldiery, who lived upon the people. The officer in charge of the local troops was also the chief magistrate of his district ; and the criminal courts of the East India Company long retained their old Mughal appellation of the Faujdari, or ' army department.' The idea of prison as a place of reformatory discipline never entered the minds of these soldier-magistrates. Our early officers found the Muhammadan jails crowded with wretched men whose sole sentence was ' to remain during pleasure '—a legal formula which, translated into honest English, meant until the harpies of the court had squeezed the prisoner's friends of their uttermost farthing. The prisons themselves were ruinous hovels, whose inmates had to be kept in stocks and fetters, or were held down flat under bamboos, not on account of their crimes, but, to use the words of an official report of 1792, ' because from the insecurity of the jails, the jailor had no other means of preventing their escape.' No Mughal Emperor ever conceived the idea of giving public instruction as a State duty to all his subjects. He might raise a marble mosque in honour of God and himself, lavish millions on a favourite lady's tomb, or grant lands to learned men of his own religion ; but the task of educating the whole Indian people, rich and poor, of whatever race, or caste, or creed, was never attempted.

In these, as in other departments, the English have had to build up, from the very foundations, the fabric of a civilised government. The material framework for such a government, its court houses, public buildings, barracks, jails, hospitals, and schools, has cost not less than a hundred millions sterling. But the revolution in the inward spirit of the administration has involved a far greater and more permanent expenditure than

this reconstruction of its outward and material fabric. We have had to re-organize a government, conceived in the interests of the pomp and luxury of the few, into a government conceived in the interests of the well-being and security of the many. The vast outlay thus involved may be realised from three items—justice, police, and education. As regards the dispensing of justice, rural tribunals, maintained by the State, scarcely existed when we obtained the country in the last century. One of the earliest acts of the East India Company was to create such tribunals. Well, I have taken six districts at hazard from my Statistical Account of Bengal, and I find that the Company allowed about the end of the last century nineteen courts of justice for these six districts. The Queen's Government of India in 1870 maintained 161 courts of justice in those six districts. The demand for accessible justice constantly becomes more exacting. Thus, in eight districts, for which in 1850 the Company allowed 176 courts of justice, 288 courts had to be provided in 1870, and further additions have since been made. Justice has been brought very near to the door of the peasant. But it has cost the Government many millions sterling to do so ; and the gross outlay has risen from under  $1\frac{3}{4}$  millions in 1857, during the last year of the Company, to over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions during the present year 1880, or twofold.

The police of India has, in like manner, been completely re-organized since the Government passed under the Crown. The general force was reconstructed on a new basis by Act V. of 1861. The Muhammadans bequeathed to us in the previous century a police which I have described from the manuscript records as 'an enormous ragged army who ate up the industry of the province.'<sup>1</sup> The Company had improved this police so far as to spend a million sterling upon it in its last year, 1857. The re-organized police of India now costs, in 1880, a gross sum exceeding  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling, or more than twofold. As regards education, no system of public instruction existed either under the Mughal Emperors or under the East India Company. Sir Charles Wood's<sup>2</sup> justly famous despatch, which laid the foundation of the enlightenment of India, was only penned in 1854. The Company had not time to give effect to that

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Rural Bengal*, 5th ed. p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> Viscount Halifax.

despatch before its rule disappeared ; and the vast system or public instruction which is now educating two millions of our eastern fellow subjects is the work of the Queen's Government in India. It is a noble work, but it has cost money. In going over the items of Indian expenditure, the single one which I find steadily increases from year to year is the expenditure on education. It now exceeds a gross sum of a million sterling per annum from the imperial revenues, with perhaps double that sum from fees and local sources. I cite only three examples of the increased cost of a Government conducted according to European standards of efficiency, but from those three items you may not unfairly judge of the increased cost of every other department.

Take Justice, Police, and Education, and you will find that the East India Company in 1857 gave less than three millions worth of these commodities to its subjects in the last year of its rule, while the Queen's Government now spends a gross sum of nearly seven millions sterling upon them. No one will grudge a rupee of the extra four millions sterling thus spent in educating the people of India, in protecting their persons and property, and in hearing their complaints. Nor, I think, can any of us grudge another large item of expenditure, almost unknown in the time of the Company, but which is now estimated at an annual charge of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling—namely, the relief of the peasantry during famine. The truth is, that we have suddenly applied our own English ideas of what a good government should do to an Asiatic country where the people pay not one-tenth per head of the English rate of taxation. It is easy to govern efficiently at a cost of forty shillings per head as in England ; but the problem in India is how to attain the same standard of efficiency at a cost of *3s. 8d.* a head. That is the sum in proportion which one finance minister after another is called to work out. Every year the Indian finance minister has to provide for more schools, more police, more courts, more hospitals, more roads, more railways, more canals. In short, every year he has to spend more money in bringing up the Indian administration to the English standard of efficiency. The money is well spent, but it has to be found, and there are only two ways by which a finance minister can find it.

He must either cut down existing expenditure, or he must increase the taxation. As a matter of fact, the finance ministers of India have done both. During the twenty-two years since India passed to the Crown they have abolished one highly paid place after another. Under the Company, the civil and military services of India were regarded as roads to an assured fortune. Those services now yield very little more than suffices for a man to discharge the duties of the position in which he may be placed. While the higher salaries have been curtailed or lopped off, the purchasing power of money has decreased, and the Indian civilian or soldier now looks forward to scarcely anything besides his hard-earned pension after a service of twenty-five to thirty-five years. Of that pension the civilian is compelled by Government to contribute fully one half by monthly subscriptions throughout his service. If he dies, his subscriptions lapse; and it is estimated that the nominal pension of 1,000*l.* a year paid to covenanted civil servants represents a net outlay to Government of under 400*l.* per annum. This cutting down of high salaries is perfectly justified by the modern conditions of Indian service. India is much nearer to England than it was under the Company. An Indian career no longer means a lifelong banishment, and Indian officers cannot now expect to be paid for the miseries of an exile which they no longer endure.

I myself believe that if we are to give a really efficient administration to India many services must be paid for at lower rates even than at present. For those rates are regulated in the higher branches of the administration by the cost of officers brought from England. You cannot work with imported labour as cheaply as you can with native labour, and I regard the more extended employment of the natives, not only as an act of justice, but as a financial necessity. Fifty years ago the natives of India were not capable of conducting an administration according to our English ideas of honesty. During centuries of Mughal rule almost every rural officer was paid by fees, and every official act had to be purchased. It is difficult to discriminate between fees and bribes, and such a system was in itself sufficient to corrupt the whole administration. It has taken two generations to eradicate this old taint from the native official mind. But a generation has now

sprung up from whose minds it has been eradicated, and who are therefore fitted to take a much larger share in the administration than the Hindus of fifty years ago. I believe that it will be impossible to deny them a larger share in the administration. There are departments, conspicuously those of Law and Justice, and Finance, in which the natives will more and more supplant the highly paid imported officials from England. There are other departments, such as the Medical, the Customs, the Telegraph, and the Post Office, in which the working establishments now consist of natives of India, and for which the superintending staff will in a constantly increasing degree be also recruited from them. The appointment of a few natives annually to the Covenanted Civil Service will not solve the problem. By all means give the natives every facility for entering that service. But the salaries of the Covenanted Service are regulated, not by the rates for local labour, but by the cost of imported officials. If we are to govern the Indian people efficiently and cheaply, we must govern them by means of themselves, and pay for the administration at the market rates for native labour.

We must, however, not only realise this great change which has taken place in the native standard of official morality, we must also realise the great change which has taken place in the physical aspects of administration. Fifty years ago, distance played a much more important part in the government of the country than it can now be allowed to play. Each district was as far separated from its neighbours as the three Presidencies are now from one another; and the three Presidencies were practically different countries, requiring completely distinct establishments for their administration. Railways and steamboats have now drawn every part of India closer together, and rendered it possible to control the whole with a smaller superintending staff. For example, the troops in each of the three Presidencies had to be organized as separate armies. This means that there are not only three Commanders-in-Chief in India, but three headquarters' establishments, three Adjutants-General, three Quarter-masters General, three Surgeons-General, &c., each with his own separate establishment of supervision and his own separate budget of expenditure. This large outlay was unavoidable when

Madras and Bombay were seventy days' march distant from Bengal. But Bombay is now only a sixty hours' railway journey from Calcutta, and steamers leave the Hugli almost daily for Madras. The telegraph connects every part of India, and flashes news in half an hour which formerly would have taken weeks in transmission. The necessity for separate headquarters' establishments for each of the three Presidencies is, therefore, becoming a thing of the past, and economies are now proposed by the Indian Army Commission in this respect.

But while reductions can thus be effected both in the civil administration by the larger employment of natives, and in the military expenditure by re-organizing the three armies in accordance with the altered physical facts of the country, such reductions will not alone suffice to meet the constantly increasing demands for expenditure. I have shown how the cost of Police, Justice, and Education has more than doubled since the last year of the Company in 1857. The civil administration, as a whole, discloses an equal increase; and, in spite of reductions in certain departments, has risen from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling in 1857 to  $13\frac{1}{2}$  millions net in 1880. The same causes which have led to this increase of expenditure in the past twenty-three years will compel a yet further increase in the next twenty years. We now educate two millions of pupils in our Indian schools. Before the end of the century I hope we shall be educating four millions.<sup>1</sup> For every square mile now protected by irrigation works there will then be nearer two square miles. For every native doctor and schoolmaster, there will probably be three. No severity of retrenchment in the civil expenditure, no re-organization of the military establishments, will suffice to meet the outlay thus involved. In India there is a necessity for a steadily increasing revenue, and there is no use in shirking the fact.

How is the additional revenue to be raised? Indian finance ministers have already answered this question. They have shown that it is possible, through the agency of local government, to increase the revenue by means which they would have found it difficult, and perhaps dangerous, to enforce as parts of an imperial central policy. A great department of Provincial Finance

<sup>1</sup> The pupils attending Indian schools in 1900-1 numbered 4,427,000.



has thus been created since the country passed to the Crown, and now yields a revenue of several millions. As the local demands for improvements in the administration increase, these demands will be met to some extent by local taxation. A tax is a tax, however it may be levied ; but in India, as in England, it is possible to do by local rates what it would be very difficult to do by a general impost. In this way local government in India has obtained an importance which no one would have ventured to predict twenty years ago, and may, before twenty years are over, have become a financial necessity.

While additional resources may thus be hoped for from local taxation, the imperial revenues have not stood still. Many of their items increase from natural causes. Thus, the land revenue has risen from under 15 millions in 1857 to 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions net in 1880. As the population multiplies they consume more salt, more excisable commodities of every sort ; and as the trade of the country develops, the revenue from stamps and miscellaneous items increases with it. The revenues of India are by no means stationary, but they do not augment with the same rapidity as the increased demands upon them. Under the Company, almost the whole revenues were supplied by indirect taxation ; the Queen's Government has been forced to introduce direct taxation. Forty years ago, a permanent income tax would have been regarded as a cruel and an unrighteous impost by the British nation. In England, we have only learned to bear an income tax by slow degrees. Year after year our fathers were assured that the income tax was only temporary ; we have been constrained to recognise it as one of the most permanent items in our national revenue. The Indian people are now learning the same lesson with equal difficulty. Twenty years ago, the income tax was introduced into India as a purely temporary measure. Its temporary character has again and again been re-asserted ; various disguises have been substituted for it ; but it has now become an established source of Indian revenue. It is an unpopular tax everywhere, but it is especially unpopular in India, where the average income is very small ; and where the lower officials, through whom such a tax must be levied, still lie under suspicion of corrupt practices. I believe it is possible to free that taxation from much of its

present unpopularity. For its vexatiousness has to a large extent proceeded from its temporary character, and from the necessity of a fresh inquisition into the private affairs of the people on each occasion of its renewal. You cannot expect a host of native underlings to be very honest, when they know that their employment will cease in a few years. But while something may be done to render the income tax less unpopular, the fact remains that the people of India are now brought face to face with direct taxation.

It may be said that, after all, we take much less revenue than the native dynasties did. Surely, if the State demands averaged 60 millions sterling during the tumultuous centuries of the Mughal Empire, the country could be made to pay the same amount under our peaceful rule. Yet the actual taxation during the ten years ending 1879 has averaged just 35 millions, and at the present moment, including the new Provincial Rates, it stands at 40 millions. If we were to levy the 80 millions of taxation which Aurangzeb demanded, India would be, financially, the most prosperous country in the world. But she would be, morally and socially, the most miserable. The Mughal Empire wrung its vast revenue out of the people by oppressions which no English minister would dare to imitate. The technical terms of the native revenue system form themselves a record of extortion and pillage. Among the Marathas, to collect revenue and to make war was synonymous. Better the poverty of the British Government of India than the imperial splendour of the Mughals, or the military magnificence of the Marathas, reared upon the misery of the peasant. In a country where the people are poor, the Government ought to be poor: for it must be either poor or oppressive. The poverty of the Indian people lies at the root of the poverty of the Indian Government.

No financial dexterity will get rid of this fundamental fact. I sometimes see devices proposed for making the Indian Government rich without rendering the Indian people miserable. One of the latest is to relax the so-called rigidity of our finance. This means that we are to calculate the cost of administration over a period of twenty years, and to allow the annual collections to fluctuate according to the harvests; relaxing, when necessary, the demand for individual years, and spreading the deficit over

the whole period of twenty years. Such a system is impracticable for two distinct reasons. In the first place, the taxpayer would never know exactly how much he would have to pay in any year. Revenue collecting in India would resolve itself into an annual wrangle between the Government officers and the people. This was the state of things under the Mughal Empire. The peasant protested and cried out; the revenue officer insisted and squeezed; and the victory rested with the most clamorous on the one side, or with the most pitiless on the other. But even after the annual wrangle was over, there would still be an annual necessity of collecting the balance of previous years. It would simply be impossible to collect such balances without the severities which disgraced the early days of the Company, when it took over the native revenue system and administered it by native officers. The second objection to relaxing the uniformity of the yearly demand arises from the fact that it would be impossible to vary the uniformity of the yearly expenditure. Punctuality in defraying the charges of Government involves, also, punctuality in realising its revenues. Under the Mughal Empire, as under the Turkish Empire at present, no large class of officials ever expected to receive regular salaries. They got their pay when they could, and those who threatened loudest got most. When the Treasury ran dry, the officials could always fall back upon the plunder of the people. This irregularity of payment was so deeply impressed upon the native revenue system that years after the Company took over Bengal it ordered as a matter of course, during a time of financial difficulty, that all payments from the Treasury should be suspended, except the cost of dieting the prisoners and the rewards for killing tigers. If the Government of India were now to get six months into arrears with the payment of its servants, it would open the old flood gates of official extortion, bribery, and fee-levying which it has taken a hundred years of honest rule to dam up. Rigid punctuality in paying one's debts is only possible by means of rigid punctuality in collecting one's dues. Apart from the evils of constant borrowing to meet current outlay, incident to such a plan of relaxing the current taxation, it would strike at the root of the first essential of a good revenue system; namely, the certainty which the

man has as to the amount which he can be called to pay. In place of a regular demand from the taxpayers and regular salaries to the public servants, it would substitute an annual wrangle with the taxpayers and an annual scramble among the officials.

The rigidity of our Indian system of finance is only one of many difficulties which a Government that tries to do right has to encounter in India. Such an administration is based upon the equality of all its subjects ; it has to work among a people steeped in the ideas of caste and of the inequality of races. I shall cite only two illustrations. Twenty-five years ago we were told that railways could never pay in India, because no man of respectable position would sit in the same carriage with a man of low caste. We open our schools to all our Indian subjects, of whatever creed or birth. The Hindus, with their practical genius for adapting themselves to the facts around them, have prospered by a frank acceptance of this system of education. But the upper classes of the Muhammadans, with their pride of race and disdainful creed, have stood aloof, and so fail to qualify themselves for the administration of a country which not long ago they ruled. Ten years ago, in my 'Indian Musalmans,' I pointed out that among 418 gazetted judicial native officers in Bengal, 341 were Hindus, while only 77 were Muhammadans. The Government took measures to remedy this inequality, and went so far as to supplement its general system of public instruction with sectarian schools and colleges for Muhammadans. But the Musalman still isolates himself, and out of 504 similar appointments now held by natives only fifty-three are filled by Muhammadans. This practically means that while one-third of the population of Lower Bengal are Musalmans, only one-tenth of the Government patronage falls to them ; the other nine-tenths are monopolized by the Hindus. It thus follows that a system of education based upon the equality of the subject results in the practical exclusion of a large section of the population from public employ.

You will now understand how unsafe are those guides who see only the anomalies of our rule without having penetrated into their causes. Such writers tell you that the people of India are very poor, therefore they conclude the Government is

to blame. I also tell you that the people of India are very poor, because the population has increased at such a rate as to outstrip, in some parts, the food-producing powers of the land ; because every square mile of Bengal has now to support three times as many families as it had to support a hundred years ago ; because every square mile of British India, deducting the outlying provinces of Burma and Assam, has to feed nearly three times as many mouths as each square mile of the Native States. Such writers tell you that the soil of India is being exhausted, and that therefore the Government is to blame ; that the expenditure is increasing ; that the revenues are inelastic ; that the rigidity of our taxation bears heavily on the people ; and that for each of these and all our other difficulties, the simple and invariable explanation is that the Government is to blame. I also tell you that the soil is being exhausted ; that the requirements for additional expenditure are incessant, while the revenues can with difficulty be increased ; and I have tried in each case to tell you honestly the reason why. Such writers tell you, or would tell you if they knew it, that in a single province, under our system of State education, twenty millions of Musalmans, the former rulers of the country, are practically ousted from public employment, and that therefore the Government must be to blame. Let me answer them in the words in which the leader of the Muhammadan community of Calcutta sums up his most able pamphlet on this exclusion of his countrymen : ‘For these figures, however lamentable, I certainly do not lay the blame at the door of Government. The real cause of this unhappy state of things is to be found in the backwardness of the Muhammadans in conforming themselves to the requirements of the times, and thus remaining behind in the race of competition with other nations.’

I only wish that the gentlemen were right who think that all our Indian difficulties are due to the shortcomings of the Government. For if they were right, then I feel sure that England, in the discharge of her high duty, would swiftly sweep away her culpable representatives in India. But, alas ! our difficulties there are not susceptible of so easy a cure. Every year England sends to India a picked body of young men from her public schools and universities to recruit the Indian

administration. There is not a master in the country who does not feel honoured when his pupils are thus chosen. For, although the old pecuniary advantages of the Indian Civil Service have very properly been curtailed, that service still forms one of the noblest and most useful careers open to our youth. To an administration thus composed England sends out, as heads, the ablest statesmen who can be tempted by the emoluments and honours of high Indian office. She supplies India with trained Parliamentary financiers like Mr. James Wilson ; with jurists and legislators like Sir Fitzjames Stephen and Sir Henry Sumner Maine ; with Governors-General like the iron Dalhousie and the beloved Mayo, from one of her great national parties, and like the wise Minto and the just Northbrook, from the other. I do not see how to improve the English materials of an administration thus selected and thus led. But I do know that, if the easy explanation of all our Indian difficulties were that the Indian Government is to blame, the British nation would very soon substitute a better government for it.

I believe that, in dealing with the difficulties which now confront it, the Government of India must look round for new allies. Those allies will be found among the natives. So long as the administration proceeded upon the English political maxim of *laissez faire* in India, it was possible to conduct its higher branches, at any rate, by Englishmen. The Company's administration, thus composed, did much. It secured India from external enemies, created internal protection for person and property, and took the first steps in the development of the country. But the good work thus commenced has assumed such dimensions under the Queen's Government of India that it can no longer be carried on, or even supervised, by imported labour from England, except at a cost which India cannot sustain. While the old duties have extended, new ones have been added. As soon as the English nation began really to interest itself in India, it found that the Government must there take on itself several functions which in England may well be left to private enterprise. In a country where the Government is the sole great capitalist, railways, canals, docks,

and commercial works of many sorts had either to be initiated by the Government or to be left unattempted. The principle of *laissez faire* can, in fact, be safely applied only to self-governing nations. The English in India are now called upon either to stand by and witness the pitiless overcrowding of masses of hungry human beings, or to aid the people in increasing the food supply to meet their growing wants. The problem is a difficult one; but I have shown why I believe it capable of solution. Forty years ago the political economists would have told us that a Government had no right to enter on such problems at all; and forty years hereafter we should have had an Indian Ireland, multiplied fiftyfold, on our hands. The condition of things in India compels the Government to enter on these problems. Their solution, and the constant demand for improvement in the general executive, will require an increasing amount of administrative labour. India cannot afford to pay for that labour at the English rates, which are the highest in the world for official service. But she can afford to pay for it at her own native rates, which are perhaps the lowest in the world for such employment.

It may be well, therefore, to know what the natives themselves think about the situation. A petition presented to Parliament last session by the British Indian Association sets forth their programme of reform. It asks for a more independent share in the legislative councils of India; and it is certain that at no distant date such a share must be conceded to the Indian people. It urges the necessity of military retrenchments, and the injustice of dealing with the Indian finances in the party interests of England rather than in the sole interest of the Indian taxpayer. At this moment, retrenchments to the extent of, I am told, 1½ millions are being proposed by the Indian Army Commission; and there is no doubt that Indian finance has been sometimes handled with an eye to English rather than to Indian interests. It asks, to touch only on the principal heads, for the more extended employment of the natives; and I believe a more extended employment of them to be not only an act of justice, but a financial necessity. The number of Europeans employed in the higher civil offices had been reduced in all the provinces

of the Bengal Presidency from 929 in 1874 to 838 in 1879, and the Government has now a scheme under consideration for further reducing them to 571.

The native petition asks for a Commission of Inquiry, similar to those great Parliamentary Committees which sat every twentieth year in the time of the Company to examine into its administration. I am compelled as a student of Indian history to acknowledge that each successive period of improvement under the Company took its rise from one of these inquests. The Parliamentary Inquiry of 1813 abolished the Company's Indian trade, and compelled it to direct its whole energies in India to the good government of the people. The Charter Act of 1833 opened up that government to the natives of India irrespective of caste, creed, or race. The Act of 1853 abolished the patronage by which the Company filled up the higher branches of its service, and laid down the principle that the administration of India was too national a concern to be left to the chances of benevolent nepotism; and that England's representatives in India must be chosen openly and without favour from the youth of England. The natives now desire that a similar inquiry should be held into the administration of India during the two-and-twenty years since it passed to the Crown. It may perhaps be deemed expedient to postpone such an inquiry till after the next census. Remember we have only had one enumeration of the Indian people. A single census forms, as I have keenly felt while writing these chapters, a very slender basis for the economical problems with which a Commission would have to deal. The Indian administration has nothing to fear, and it may have much to learn, from an inquiry into its work. It is, perhaps, the only administration in the world which has no interest in perpetuating itself. No Indian civilian has the smallest power to secure for son or nephew a place in the service to which he himself belongs. And I feel sure that, if it were found that India could be better administered on some new system, the Indian Civil Service would give its utmost energies to carry out the change.

The native petition also asks that the recent restrictions on the liberty of the Press should be removed. 'The Indian



Press spoke out the truth,' Mr. Gladstone said in Mid-Lothian, 'what was the true mind of the people of India; so that while the freedom of the vernacular Press is recommended in India by all the considerations which recommend it in England, there are other considerations besides. We can get at the minds of people here by other means than the Press. They can meet and petition, and a certain number of them can vote. But in India their meetings and petitioning are comparatively ineffective, while the power of voting is there unknown. The Press was the only means the Government had of getting at the sentiments of the Indian people.'

There is one thing more for which the natives ask, and that is representative institutions for India. I believe that such institutions will, before long, not only be possible but necessary, and that at this moment an electoral body is being developed in India by the municipalities and local district boards. There are already 1,163 elected members in the municipal bodies of the Bengal and Madras Presidencies alone. The legislative councils of the Imperial and local Governments have each a native element in their composition, which, although nominated, is fairly chosen so as to represent the various leading classes of the people. Thus of the ten members of the Bengal Council three are covenanted civilians, one is a Crown lawyer, two are non-official Europeans, and four natives. Of the natives, the first is the editor of the *Hindu Patriot*, the chief native paper in India; the second is the head of the Muhammadan community in Calcutta; the other two represent the landed and important rural interests. It will not be easy to work representative institutions, and it will be very easy to be misled by them. In the first place, England must make up her mind that, in granting such institutions to the Indian people, she is parting to some extent with her control over India. In the second place, we must proceed upon native lines, rather than on those paper constitutions for India which English writers love to manufacture. What we want at the present stage is a recognition of the end to be attained, not a unanimity as to any particular scheme for attaining it.

We must carefully consider the native solutions for the

problem ; and I think we may learn a lesson from the practical and moderate character of the native demands. The *Hindu Patriot* lately expressed those demands in three feasible proposals. First, the extension of the elective principle to all first-class municipalities of British India. Second, the concession to the municipal boards of the three Presidency towns, and a few other great Indian cities, of the right to elect members to the Legislative Councils. Third, the extension of the scope of those Councils, so as to include questions of finance. There would still be the representation of rural India to be provided for by nomination or otherwise. It has taken ten centuries to make the British Constitution, and we must not try to build up one for India in a day. Meanwhile I can only repeat what I said in 1879 at Birmingham on this point : ‘ I do not believe that a people numbering one-sixth of the whole inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of their country. I do not believe that races, among whom we raise a taxation of 35 millions sterling, and into whom we have instilled the maxim of “ No taxation without representation,” as a fundamental right of a people, can be permanently excluded from a share in the management of their finances. I do not believe it practicable to curtail, for long, the right of the freest criticism on their rulers to 191 millions of British subjects, who have the speeches of our great English statesmen at this moment ringing in their ears.’

Administrative improvements can do much, but the Indian people themselves can do more. The poverty of certain parts of India is the direct and inevitable result of the over-population of those parts of India. The mass of the husbandmen are living in defiance of economic laws. A people of small cultivators cannot be prosperous if they marry irrespective of the means of subsistence, and allow their numbers to outstrip the food-producing powers of the soil. Now that the sword is no longer allowed to do its old work, they must submit to prudential restraints on marriage, or they must suffer hunger. Such restraints have been imperative upon races of small cultivators

since the days when Plato wrote his 'Republic.' The natives must also equalise the pressure on the soil by distributing themselves more equally over the country. There is plenty of fertile land in India still awaiting the plough. The Indian husbandman must learn to mobilise himself and to migrate from the overcrowded provinces to the under-peopled ones. But prudential restraints upon marriage and migration, or emigration, are repugnant alike to the religious customs and to the most deeply seated feelings of the Indian husbandman. Any general improvement in these respects must be a work of time. All we can do is to shorten that time by giving the amplest facilities for labour transport, for education, for manufactures, mining enterprise, and trade. Meanwhile, Government must throw itself into the breach, by grappling with the necessity for an increased and a better distributed food supply. Changes in the marriage customs, and migrations to new provinces, now opposed by all the traditions of the past, will be forced by the pressure of circumstances upon no distant generation of the Indian people. Every year thousands of new pupils are gathered into our schools, those pestles and mortars for the superstitions and priestcraft of India. English writers who tell our Indian fellow-subjects to look to the Government for every improvement in their lot are doing a very great dis-service to the Indian races. The permanent remedies for the poverty of India rest with the people themselves.

But while the Indian Government can do much, and the Indian people can do more, there are some unfulfilled functions which Englishmen in England must with greater fidelity perform. They must realise that the responsibility for India has passed into the hands of Parliament, and through Parliament to the electoral body of Great Britain. They must realise that if, through ignorance or indifference, they fail to discharge that responsibility, they are acting as bad citizens. They must therefore set themselves to learn more about India; they must act in a spirit of absolute honesty towards the Indian finances; and they must deal with Indian questions sent home for their decision, not in the interests of powerful classes or political parties in England, but in the sole interest of the

Indian people. I believe that important questions of this sort will before long be submitted to Parliament. When that time comes, if any remembrance of this essay lingers among my countrymen, I hope it may make them more alive to their responsibilities to India, and the more earnest to do their duty by the Indian people.

## V

### A RIVER OF RUINED CAPITALS<sup>1</sup>

A LAMENTED historian has shown the influence exerted on the making of England by the natural configuration of the island. But while physical geography is now recognised as an initial factor in the fortunes of European countries, it has received scanty acknowledgment in histories of the East. Yet in India, where man has for ages confronted with bare arms the forces of tropical nature, his terrestrial surroundings have controlled his lot with an energy unknown in our temperate clime. Mountains and rivers and regions of forest set barriers to human ambition in India, barriers against which the most powerful Mughal sovereign in vain shattered his dynasty. The same isolating influences which forbad a universal dominion tended also to perpetuate local institutions, race animosities, and exclusive creeds. The conception of India as a whole, or of its races as a united people, is a conception of the British brain. The realisation of that conception is the great task of British rule. For in India man no longer confronts the forces of nature with bare arms. Science, which is in England a calm pursuit, is to our countrymen in the East an instrument of empire. It has overtopped the mountains, spanned the rivers, and pierced the forests which divided kingdom from kingdom. It has thrown down the landmarks of isolation which Nature had set up, and is clasping together with bands of iron the peoples and provinces of a united India.

The following pages present a single episode in this great struggle between man and nature. I shall show how, during ages,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Nineteenth Century* of January 1888.

nature lorded it over man, laughing at his painful toils, and destroying with scornful ease his mightiest works. I shall indicate the new allies which man has lately called to his aid. The battle is still a drawn one, and on its issue the prosperity, if not the existence, of the capital of British India now depends. I believe that only by thus examining Indian history in connection with Indian geography can its true significance in the past or its bearings on the present be understood. There is another point, also, in regard to which I have a strong conviction. When Marco Polo returned from the East, the Venetians nicknamed him the Man of Millions, from the huge figures in which he indulged. Indian history and Indian progress still express themselves in vast totals—in totals so enormous as almost to seem to place themselves outside the range of accurate Western research. I believe that if we are to approach Indian questions in a scientific spirit, we must begin by getting rid of these immense integers. We must shun the foible of Messer Marco Millions. For in India, as elsewhere, the aggregate is merely the sum of its items, and exact knowledge is best reached by proceeding from the particular to the general—by leaving the whole alone until we have examined its parts. This article will restrict itself to a short river trough, which runs inland from the Bay of Bengal, with the buried Buddhist port near its mouth; with Calcutta about half-way up; and with Murshidabad, the forsaken Muhammadan capital, towards its northern end.

The Hugli is the most westerly of the network of channels by which the Ganges pours into the sea. Its length, under its distinctive name, is less than 150 miles—a length altogether insignificant compared with the great waterways of India. But even its short course exhibits in full work the twofold task of the Bengal rivers as creators and destroyers. The delta through which it flows was built up in times primæval, out of the sea, by the silt which the Hugli and adjacent channels brought down from inland plains and Himalayan heights, a thousand miles off. Their inundations still add a yearly coating of slime to vast low-lying tracts; and we can stand by each autumn and see the ancient secrets of landmaking laid bare. Each autumn, too, the network of currents rend away square miles from their banks,

and deposit their plunder as new alluvial formations further down. Or a broad river writhes like a monster snake across the country, leaving dry its old bed, and covering with deep water what was lately solid land.

Most of the channels do their work in solitude, in drowned wastes where the rhinoceros and crocodile wallow in the slush, and whither the woodcutter only comes in the dry months, after the rivers have spent their fury for the year. But the Hugli carries on its ancient task in a thickly peopled country, destroying and reproducing with an equal balance amid the homesteads and cities of men. Since the dawn of history it has formed the great high road from Bengal to the sea. One Indian race after another built their capitals, one European nation after another founded their settlements, on its banks. Buddhists, Hindus, Musalmans, Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, French, Germans, and English, have lined with ports and fortresses that magnificent waterway.

The insatiable river has dealt impartially with all. Some it has left high and dry, others it has buried under mud, one it has cleft in twain and covered with its waters: but all it has attacked, or deserted, or destroyed. With a single exception, whatever it has touched it has defaced. One city only has completely resisted its assaults. Calcutta alone has escaped unharmed to tell of that appalling series of catastrophes. The others lie entombed in the silt, or moulder like wrecks on the bank. The river flows on relentless and majestic as of old, ceaselessly preaching with its still small ripple, the ripple that has sapped the palaces of kings and brought low the temples of the gods, that here we have no abiding city. It is a vision of the world's vanities such as the world has not seen since Spenser mourned the 'Ruines of Rome'—

Ne ought save Tyber hastning to his fall  
Remaines of all: O world's inconstancie!  
That which is firme doth flit and fall away,  
And that is flitting doth abide and stay.

In order to understand a great Indian waterway, we must lay aside our common English idea of a river. In England the streams form lines of drainage from the interior to the sea.

The life of a Bengal river like the Ganges is much more complex. Its biography divides itself into three chapters—a boisterous boyhood, a laborious manhood, a sad old age. In its youth the Ganges leaps out from a snow-bed in the Himalayas, and races across the sub-montane tracts, gathering pebbles and diverse mineral treasures as it bounds along. After three hundred miles of this play, it settles down to its serious work in life, grinding its mountain spoils to powder against its sides, bearing on its breast the commerce of provinces, and distributing its waters for the cultivation of the soil. Its manhood lasts a thousand miles, during which it receives tributaries from both sides, and rolls onward with an ever-increasing volume of water and silt. But as it grows older it becomes slower, losing in pace as it gains in bulk, until it reaches a country so level that its mighty mass can no longer hold together, and its divergent waters part from the main stream to find separate courses to the sea. The point at which this dismemberance takes place marks the head of the delta. But the dismembered river has still an old age of full two hundred miles before its worn-out currents find rest. It toils sluggishly across the delta, splitting up into many channels, each of which searches a course for itself southwards, with endless bifurcations, new junctions, twists, and convolutions.

The enfeebled currents can no longer carry on the silt which the parent stream, in its vigorous manhood, has borne down. They accordingly deposit their burdens in their beds, or along their margins, thus raising their banks above the low adjacent plains. They build themselves up, as it were, into high-level canals. The delta thus consists of branching rivers winding about at a perilous elevation, with a series of hollow-lands or dips between. The lofty banks alone prevent the channels from spilling over; and when a channel has filled up, the old banks run like ridges across the delta, showing where a dead river once flowed. In the rainy season the floods burst over the banks, and drown the surrounding flats with a silt-laden deluge. Then the waters settle and drop their load in the form of a coating of mud. As the inundation subsides, the aqueous expanse, now denuded of its silt, partly finds its way back to the channels, partly sinks into the porous soil, and partly stagnates in land-



locked fens. The Ganges thus yields up in its old age the accumulations of its youth and manhood. Earth to earth. The last scene of all is the solitude of tidal creeks and jungle, amid whose silence its waters merge into the sea.

The Hugli is formed by the three most westerly of the deltaic spill-streams of the Ganges. The first or most northerly is the Bhagirathi, a very ancient river, which represents the original course of the Ganges, down the Hugli trough to the Bay of Bengal. A legend tells how a demon diverted the sacred Ganges by swallowing it. The demon was a geological one—a band of stiff yellow clay which confined the Ganges to its ancient bed, until a flood burst through the barrier and opened a passage for the main body of the Ganges to the east. The disruption took place in prehistoric times. But to this day the Bhagirathi, and the Hugli which it helps to form lower down, retain the sanctity of the parent stream. The Ganges ceases to be holy eastward from the point where the Bhagirathi breaks south. It was at this point that Holy Mother Ganga vouchsafed, in answer to the Sage's prayer, to divide herself into a hundred channels to make sure that her purifying waters should reach, and cleanse from sin, the concealed ashes of the heroes. Those channels form her distributaries through the delta. The Bhagirathi, although for centuries a mere spill-stream from the parent Ganges, is still called the Ganges by the villagers along its course.

The levels of the surrounding country show that the bed of the Bhagirathi must once have been many times its present size. The small portion of the waters of the Ganges which it continued to receive after the geological disruption no longer sufficed to keep open its former wide channel. Its bed accordingly silted up, forming islands, shoals, and accretions to its banks. It now discloses the last stage in the decay of a deltaic river. In that stage the process of silting up completes itself, until the stream dwindles into a series of pools and finally disappears. This fate is averted from the Bhagirathi by engineering efforts. The vast changes which have taken place in the Hugli trough may be estimated from the one fact, that the first of its headwaters, which originally poured into it the mighty Ganges, is now a dying river kept alive by artificial devices.

The other two headwaters of the Hugli bear witness to not less memorable vicissitudes. The second of them takes off from the Ganges about forty miles eastward from the Bhagirathi. At one time it brought down such masses of water from the Ganges as to earn the name of the Terrible. But in our own days it was for long a deceased river ; its mouth or intake from the Ganges was closed with mud ; its course was cut into three parts by other streams. The country through which it flowed must once have been the scene of fluvial revolutions on an appalling scale. That tract is now covered with a network of dead rivers ; a vast swampy reticulation in some places stretching as lines of pools, in others as fertile green hollows. But thirteen years ago a flood once more burst open the mouth of the Terrible from the Ganges, and it re-expanded from a little cut into a broad distributary. The third of the Hugli headwaters has its principal offtake from the Ganges again about forty miles further down. It constantly shifts its point of bifurcation from the Ganges, moving its mouth up and down the parent river to a distance of ten miles. All the three headwaters of the Hugli dwindle to shallow streams in the cold weather. At many places a depth of eighteen inches cannot always be maintained by the most skilful engineering. But during the rains each of them pours down enormous floods from the Ganges to the Hugli trough.

The Hugli, thus formed by three uncertain spill-streams of the Ganges from the north and east, receives no important tributary on its western bank above Calcutta. One channel brings down the torrents from the mountain fringe of the Central India plateau. But during three-quarters of the year this channel dwindles, in its upper course, to a silver thread amid expanses of sand. Formerly, indeed, the Hugli above Calcutta received a mighty river from the westward, the Damodar. About two centuries ago, however, that giant stream burst southward, and now enters the Hugli far below Calcutta. For practical purposes, therefore, the only feeders of the Hugli are the three spill-streams from the Ganges on the north and east.

How comes it that these decaying rivers suffice to supply one of the great commercial waterways of the world? In the

dry weather, writes the officer in charge of them, it is impossible, at a short distance below their final point of junction, 'to tell whether they are opened or closed, as the proportion of water which they supply' to the Hugli 'is a mere trifle.' Thus in 1869 two of them were closed, and the third only yielded a trickle of twenty cubic feet a second. Yet within fifty miles of their junction the Hugli has grown into a magnificent river, deep enough for the largest ships, and supplying Calcutta with twelve million gallons of water a day without any appreciable diminution to the navigable channel.

This was long a mystery. The explanation is that during the eight dry months the Hugli is fed partly by infiltration underground, and partly by the tide. The delta forms a subterraneous sieve of silt, through which countless rills of water percolate into the deep trough which the Hugli has scooped out for itself. The drainage from the swamps and hollow lands, finding no outlet on the surface, sinks into the porous alluvium. The delta thus stores up inexhaustible underground reservoirs, to feed the Hugli in the hot weather. There is a moving mass of waters beneath the surface of the land, searching out paths into the low level formed by the Hugli drain. This perpetual process of subterrene infiltration, together with the action of the tides, renders the Hugli almost independent of its headwaters so long as it can maintain the depth of its trough below the adjacent country. That depth is secured by the scouring of the current in the rainy season. During the dry months the Hugli silts up. But if only its headwaters are kept from closing altogether, the floods from the Ganges will pour down them on the first burst of the rains, and again deepen the Hugli trough. The problem of engineering, therefore, is to save the three headwaters from being absolutely silted up during the dry season.

The struggle between science and nature which the last sentence represents lies beyond the scope of this article. Meanwhile let us sail quickly up the Hugli in the cold weather, and see how man, unaided by science, fared in the conflict. The country round the mouth of the river consists of disappointing sand banks or mean mud formations, covered with coarse grass and barely a few inches above high-tide. But about thirty-five

miles below Calcutta we reach a better raised land, bearing cocoanuts and rich crops of rice. There on the western side of the Hugli, but at some distance from its present course, and upon a muddy tributary, once flourished the Buddhist port of Bengal. From that port of Tamluk the Buddhist pilgrim of the fifth century A.D. took shipping to Ceylon. It is now an inland village six miles from the Hugli channel and fifty from the sea. Its Buddhist princes, with their ten monasteries and one thousand monks, succumbed to Hindu kings of the warrior caste, who built a fortified palace said to cover eight square miles. The Hindu kings of the warrior caste were succeeded by a semi-aboriginal line of fishermen princes. As each dynasty perished, the delta buried their works beneath its silt. The floods now unearth Buddhist coins from the deep gullies which they cut during the rains; sea-shells and fragments of houses occur at a depth of twenty feet. The old Buddhist port lies far down in the mud; of the great palace of the Hindu warrior kings only faint traces remain above the surface. Even the present temple, said to be built by the later fishermen princes, is already partly below ground. Its mighty foundation of logs spread out upon the delta, heaped with solid masonry to a height of thirty feet, and surmounted by a Cyclopean triple wall and dome, forms a marvel of mediæval engineering. But the massive structure, which has defied the floods and tidal waves of centuries, is being softly, silently, surely shovelled underground by the silt.

A little above the buried Buddhist port, but on the Hugli itself, we come to Falta. Once the site of a Dutch factory, and a busy harbour of Dutch commerce, it formed the retreat of the English Council in 1756, after the Black Hole and their flight from Calcutta. It now consists of a poor hamlet and a few grassy earthworks mounted with guns. The Dutch factory is gone, the Dutch commerce is gone; it strains the imagination to conceive that this green solitary place was once the last foothold of the British power in Bengal. I moored my barge for the night off its silent bank, and read the official records of those disastrous days. A consultation held by the fugitive Council on board the schooner 'Phoenix' relates how their military member had written 'a complimentary letter to the

Nawab,' who had done their comrades to death, 'complaining a little of the hard usage of the English Honourable Company, assuring him of his good intentions notwithstanding what had happened, and begging him in the meanwhile, till things were cleared up, that he would treat him at least as a friend, and give orders that our people might be supplied with provisions in a full and friendly manner.' To such a depth of abasement had fallen the British power—that power to which in less than a year the field of Plassey, higher up the same river, was to give the mastery of Bengal.

Swiftly sailing past Calcutta, with its fourfold tiers of great ships, its fortress, palaces, domes, and monuments, we come upon a series of five early European settlements, from sixteen to twenty-eight miles above the British capital. Each one of these formed the subject of as high hopes as Calcutta; several of them seemed to give promise of a greater future. Every one of them is now deserted by trade; not one of them could be reached by the smallest ships of modern commerce. The Hugli quickly deteriorates above the limits of the Calcutta port, and the rival European settlements higher up are as effectually cut off from the sea as if they were buried, like the Buddhist harbour, in the mud of the delta.

The first of these settlements, sixteen miles by water above Calcutta, is the old Danish town of Serampur. It formed the outcome of a century of efforts by the Danes to establish themselves in Bengal. During the Napoleonic wars it was a prosperous port, many of our own ships sailing thence to avoid the heavy insurance paid by British vessels. Ships of 600 to 800 tons, the largest then in use, could lie off its wharfs. In the second quarter of the present century the silt formations of the Hugli channel rendered it inaccessible to maritime commerce. The manuscript account of the settlement, drawn up with minute care when we took over the town from the Danes in 1845, sets forth every detail, down to the exact number of hand looms, burial grounds, and liquor shops. But throughout its seventy-seven folio pages I could discover not one word indicating the survival of a sea-going trade.

On the opposite or eastern bank, a couple of miles further up, lay an ancient German settlement, Bankipur, the scene of

an enterprise on which the eyes of European statesmen were once malevolently fixed. No trace of it now survives ; its very name has disappeared from the maps, and can only be found in a chart of the last century. Carlyle, with picturesque inaccuracy, describes that enterprise as the Third Shadow Hunt of Emperor Karl the Sixth. 'The Kaiser's Imperial Ostend East India Company,' he says, 'which convulsed the diplomatic mind for seven years to come, and made Europe lurch from side to side in a terrific manner, proved a mere paper company, never sent ships, only produced diplomacies, and "had the honour to be."' As a matter of fact, the Company not only sent ships but paid dividends, and founded settlements which stirred up the fiercest jealousy in India. Although sacrificed in Europe by the Emperor to obtain the Pragmatic Sanction in 1727, the Ostend Company went on with its business for many years, and became finally bankrupt in 1784. Its settlement on the Hugli, deserted by the Vienna Court, was destroyed in 1733 by a Muhammadan general, whom the rival European traders stirred up against it. The despairing garrison and their brave chief, who lost an arm by a cannon-ball, little thought that they would appear in history as mere paper persons and diplomatic shadows who had only 'had the honour to be.' The European companies were in those days as deadly to each other as the river was destructive to their settlements. When Frederick the Great sent a later expedition, the native Viceroy of Bengal warned the other Europeans against the coming of the German ships. 'God forbid that they should come this way !' was the pious response of the President of the English Council ; 'but should this be the case, I am in hopes that through your Uprightness they will be either sunk, broke, or destroyed.'

A few miles higher up the river on the western bank, the French settlement of Chandernagar still flies the tricolor. In the last century it was bombarded by English vessels of war. A great silt bank, which has formed outside it, would now effectually protect it from any such attack. A grassy slope has taken the place of the deep water in which the admiral's flagship lay. Captured and recaptured by the British during the long wars, the settlement now reposes under international treaties,

a trim little French town landlocked from maritime commerce. A couple of miles above it lies the decayed Dutch settlement, Chinsura; and another mile further on was the ancient Portuguese emporium, Hugli town. Both of these were great resorts of sea-going trade before Calcutta was thought of. In 1632, when the Muhammadans took Hugli town from the Portuguese, and made it their own royal port of Bengal, they captured over three hundred ships, large and small, in the harbour. As one now approaches the old Dutch and Portuguese settlements, a large alluvial island, covered with rank grasses and a few trees, divides the stream into uncertain channels, with lesser silt formations above and below. Noble buttressed houses and the remains of the river wall still line the banks of the landlocked harbours. Then the marvellous new railway bridge seems to cross the sky, its three cantilever spans high up in the air above the river, with native boats crawling like flies underneath. Beyond rise the tower and belfry of the Portuguese monastery of Bandel, the oldest house of Christian worship in Bengal, built originally in 1599. The Virgin in a bright blue robe, with the Infant in her arms, and a garland of fresh rosemaries round her neck, stands out aloft under a canopy. Two lamps ever lit by her side served as beacons during centuries to the European ships which can never again ascend the river. They now guide the native boatmen for miles down the decaying channels.

From this point upwards, the Hugli river is a mere record of ruin. An expanse of shallows spreads out among silt formations, stake nets, and mud. Oval-bottomed country boats, with high painted sterns, bulging bellies, and enormous brown square sails, make their way up and down with the tide. But the distant high banks, crowned by venerable trees, and now separated from the water by emerald-green flats, prove that a great and powerful river once flowed past them. For some miles the channel forms the dwindled remains of an ancient lake. Old names, such as the Sea of Delight, now solid land, bear witness to a time when it received the inflow of rivers long dead or in decay. From this mighty mass of waters one arm reached the sea south-eastward, by the present Hugli trough;

another, and once larger, branch, known as the Saraswati, or Goddess of Flowing Speech, broke off to the south-west. At their point of bifurcation stands Tribeni, a very ancient place of pilgrimage. But the larger western branch, or Goddess of Speech, is now a silent and dead river, running for miles as a green broad hollow through the country, with a tidal ditch which you can jump across in the dry weather.

Yet on this dead western branch flourished the royal port of Bengal from a prehistoric age till the time of the Portuguese. Its name, Satgaon, refers its origin to the Seven Sages of Hindu mythology, and the map of 1540 A.D. marks its river as a large channel. Purchas in the beginning of the next century describes it as 'a reasonable fair citie for a citie of the Moores, abounding with all things.' Foreign trade sharpened the wits of the townsmen, and a Bengali proverb still makes 'a man of Satgaon' synonymous with a shrewd fellow. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the river silted up, and the royal port of Bengal was transferred to Hugli town. I walked a few miles along the broad depression where once the river had flowed, and searched for the ancient city. I found only a region of mounds covered with countless fragments of fine bricks, buried under thickets of thorn and stunted palms. I asked a poor nomadic family of sugar-makers, who were boiling down the date juice into syrup in earthen pots under a tree, 'Where was the fort?' They pointed to the jungle around. I asked, 'Where was the harbour?' For a time they could not comprehend what I wanted. At length the father took me to a dank hollow, and said that some years ago the floods in the rainy season had there washed out the timbers of a sea-going ship from deep under the ground.

What caused this ruin? I have said that although the Hugli now receives no important affluent on its western bank, yet at one time a great tributary flowed into it from that side. This was the Damodar, which brings down the drainage of the western plains and highlands of Lower Bengal. It originally entered the Hugli a few miles above the Saraswati branch on which lay the royal port. But between 1500 and 1800 A.D. its floods gradually worked a more direct passage for themselves to



the south. Instead of entering the Hugli about thirty-five miles above Calcutta, it now enters the Hugli nearly thirty-five miles below Calcutta. The Hugli trough, therefore, no longer receives its old copious water supply throughout the intermediate seventy miles. Its bed accordingly silted up, and certain old branches or off-takes from it, like the one on which lay the royal Muhammadan port of Bengal, have died away. This great fluvial revolution, after preparing itself during three centuries, ended in fifty years of terrible catastrophes. The ancient mouth of the Damodar into the Hugli above Calcutta had almost completely closed up, while the inundations had not yet opened to a sufficient width the new channel to the south. In 1770, for example, the Damodar floods, struggling to find a passage, destroyed the chief town of that part of Bengal. During many years our officers anxiously considered whether it was possible to re-open by artificial means its old exit into the Hugli. 'Picture to yourself,' writes a Calcutta journal of its flood in 1823, 'a flat country completely under water, running with a force apparently irresistible, and carrying with it dead bodies, roofs of houses, palanquins, and wreck of every description.'

Proceeding upwards from the old mouth of the Damodar, the Hugli abandons itself to every wild form of fluvial caprice. At places a deep cut; at others a shallow expanse of water, in the middle of which the fishermen wade with their hand-nets; or a mean new channel, with old lakes and swamps which mark its former bed, but which are now separated from it by high sandy ridges. Nadiya, the old Hindu capital, stands at the junction of its two upper head-waters, about sixty-five miles above Calcutta. We reach the ancient city through a river chaos, emerging at length upon a well-marked channel below the junction. It was from Nadiya that the last Hindu King of Bengal, on the approach of the Muhammadan invader in 1203, fled from his palace in the middle of dinner, as the story runs, with his sandals snatched up in his hand. It was at Nadiya that the deity was incarnated in the fifteenth century A.D. in the great Hindu reformer, the Luther of Bengal. At Nadiya the Sanskrit colleges, since the dawn of history, have taught

their abstruse philosophy to colonies of students, who calmly pursued the life of a learner from boyhood to white-haired old age.

I landed with feelings of reverence at this ancient Oxford of India. A fat benevolent abbot paused in fingering his beads to salute me from the verandah of a Hindu monastery. I asked him for the birthplace of the divine founder of his faith. The true site, he said, was now covered by the river. The Hugli had first cut the sacred city in two, then twisted right round the town, leaving anything that remained of the original capital on the opposite bank. Whatever the water had gone over, it had buried beneath its silt. I had with me the Sanskrit chronicle of the present line of Nadiya Rajas. It begins with the arrival of their ancestor, one of the first five eponymous Brahman immigrants into Bengal, according to its chronology, in the eleventh century A.D. It brings down their annals from father to son to the great Raja of the eighteenth century, Clive's friend, who received twelve cannons as a trophy from Plassey. So splendid were the charities of this Indian scholar-prince that it became a proverb that any man of the priestly caste in Bengal who had not received a gift from him could be no true Brahman. The Rajas long ago ceased to reside in a city which had become a mere prey to the river. Nadiya is now a collection of peasants' huts, grain shops, mud colleges, and crumbling Hindu monasteries, cut up by gullies and hollows. A few native magnates still have houses in the holy city. The only objects that struck me in its narrow lanes were the bands of yellow-robed pilgrims on their way to bathe in the river; two stately sacred bulls who paced about in well-fed complacency; and the village idiot, swollen with monastic rice, listlessly flapping the flies with a palm-leaf as he lay in the sun.

Above Nadiya, where its two upper headwaters unite, the Hugli loses its distinctive name. We thread our way up its chief confluent, the Bhagirathi, amid spurs and training works and many engineering devices: now following the channel across a wilderness of glistening sand, now sticking for an hour in the mud, although our barge and flat-bottomed steamer only draw twenty inches of water. In a region of wickerwork dams

and interwoven stakes for keeping the river open, we reach the field of Plassey, on which in 1757 Clive won Bengal. After trudging about with the village watchman, trying to make out a plan of the battle, I rested at noon under a noble pipal tree. Among its bare and multitudinous roots, heaps of tiny earthenware horses, with toy flags of talc and tinsel, are piled up in memory of the Muhammadan generals who fell in the fight. The venerable tree has become a place of pilgrimage for both Musalmans and Hindus. The custodian is a Muhammadan, but two of the little shrines are tipped with red paint in honour of the Hindu goddess Kali. At the yearly festival of the fallen warriors, miraculous cures are wrought on pilgrims of both faiths.

I whiled away the midday heat with a copy of Clive's manuscript despatch to the Secret Committee. His account of the battle is very brief. Finding the enemy coming on in overwhelming force at daybreak, he lay with his handful of troops securely 'lodged in a large grove, surrounded with good mud banks.' His only hope was in a night attack. But at noon, when his assailants had drawn back into their camp, doubtless for their midday meal, Clive made a rush on one or two of their advanced positions, from which their French gunners had somewhat annoyed him. Encouraged by his momentary success, and amid a confusion caused by the fall of several of the Nawab's chief officers, he again sprang forward on an angle of the enemy's entrenchments. A panic suddenly swept across the unwieldy encampment, probably surprised over its cooking-pots, and the battle was a six miles' pursuit of the wildly flying masses.

A semicircle of peasants gathered round me, ready with conflicting answers to any questions that occurred as I read. Fifty years after the battle of Plassey the river had completely eaten away the field on which it was fought. 'Every trace is obliterated,' wrote a traveller in 1801, 'and a few miserable huts overhanging the water are the only remains of the celebrated Plassey.' In a later caprice the river deserted the bank, which it had thus cut away, and made a plunge to the opposite or western side. The still water which it left on the eastern bank

soon covered with deep silt the site of the battlefield that it had once engulfed. Acres of new alluvial formations, meadows, slopes, and green flats gently declining to the river, take the place of Clive's mango grove and the Nawab's encampment. The wandering priest, who served the shrines under the tree, presented me with an old-fashioned leaden bullet which he said a late flood had laid bare.

Some distance above Plassey lies Murshidabad, once the Muhammadan metropolis of Lower Bengal, now the last city on the river of ruined capitals. Here, too, the decay of the channel would have sufficed to destroy its old trade. But a swifter agent of change wrought the ruin of Murshidabad. The cannon of Plassey sounded its doom. The present Nawab, a courteous, sad-eyed representative of the Muhammadan Viceroy from whom we took over Bengal, kindly lent me one of his empty palaces. The two Englishmen whom his Highness most earnestly inquired after were the Prince of Wales and Mr. Roberts, jun. Indeed he was good enough to show me some pretty fancy strokes which he had learned from the champion billiard-player. Next evening I looked down from the tower of the great mosque on a green stretch of woodland, which Clive described as a city as large and populous as London. The palaces of the nobles had given place to brick houses; the brick houses to mud cottages; the mud cottages to mat huts; the mat huts to straw hovels. A poor and struggling population was invisible somewhere around me, but in dwellings so mean as to be buried under the palms and brushwood. A wreck of a city with bazaars and streets was there. Yet, looking down from the tower, scarce a building, save the Nawab's palace, rose above the surface of the jungle.

Of all the cities and capitals that man has built upon the Hugli, only one can now be reached by sea-going ships. The sole survival is Calcutta. The long story of ruin compels us to ask whether the same fate hangs over the capital of British India. Above Calcutta, the headwaters of the Hugli still silt up, and are essentially decaying rivers. Below Calcutta, the present channel of the Damodar enters the Hugli at so acute an angle that it has thrown up the James and Mary Sands, the

most dangerous river-shoal known to navigation. The combined discharges of the Damodar and Rupnarayan rivers join the Hugli, close to each from the same bank. Their intrusive mass of water arrests the flow of the Hugli current, and so causes it to deposit its silt, thus forming the James and Mary. In 1854 a committee of experts reported by a majority that, while modern ships required a greater depth of water, the Hugli channels had deteriorated, and that their deterioration would under existing conditions go on. The capital of British India was brought face to face with the question whether it would succumb, as every previous capital on the river had succumbed, to the forces of nature, or whether it would fight them. In 1793 a similar question had arisen in regard to a project for re-opening the old mouth of the Damodar above Calcutta. In the last century the Government decided, and with its then meagre resources of engineering wisely decided, not to fight nature. In the present century the Government has decided, and with the enlarged resources of modern engineering has wisely decided, to take up the gage of battle.

It is one of the most marvellous struggles between science and nature which the world has ever seen. In this article I have had to exhibit man as beaten at every point; on another opportunity I may perhaps present the new aspects of the conflict. On the one side nature is the stronger; on the other side science is more intelligent. It is a war between brute force and human strategy, carried on not by mere isolated fights, but by perennial campaigns spread over wide territories. Science finds that although she cannot control nature, yet that she can outwit and circumvent her. As regards the headwaters above Calcutta, it is not possible to coerce the spill-streams of the Ganges, but it is possible to coax and train them along the desired channels. As regards the Hugli below Calcutta, all that can be effected by vigilance in watching the shoals and by skill in evading them is accomplished. The deterioration of the channels seems for the time to be arrested. But Calcutta has deliberately faced the fact that the forces of tropical nature may any year overwhelm and wreck the delicate contrivances of man. She has, therefore, thrown out two advanced works in the form of railways towards the coast. One of these railways taps the Hugli where it

expands into an estuary below the perilous James and Mary shoal. The other runs south-east to a new and deep river, the Matla. Calcutta now sits calmly, although with no false sense of security, in her state of siege ; fighting for her ancient waterway to the last, but provided with alternative routes from the sea, even if the Hugli should perish. *Sedet æternumque sedebit.*

## VI

### OUR MISSIONARIES<sup>1</sup>

SAINT PAUL, when he made answer before princes and governors, was wont to divide his defence between eloquent vindication and well-weighed argument. The great missionary Apologia of last month wisely followed the same lines. A series of crowded public meetings awakened enthusiasm and powerfully urged the religious claims of missionary enterprise. A separate series of Open Conferences quietly and accurately examined into the practical problems of missionary work. It is full time that to some of the questions thus raised an honest answer should be given. During a century Protestant missionaries have been continuously at labour, and year by year they make an ever-increasing demand upon the zeal and the resources of Christendom. Thoughtful men in England and America ask, in all seriousness, what is the practical result of so vast an expenditure of effort? And while the world thus seeks for a sign, the Churches also desire light. What lesson does the hard-won experience of the century teach; the experience bought by the lives and labours of thousands of devoted men and women in every quarter of the globe? What conquests has that great missionary army made from the dark continents of ignorance and cruel rites? What influence has it exerted on the higher Eastern races who have a religion, a literature, a civilisation older than our own? How far do the missionary methods of the past accord with the actual needs of the present?

For the first time the Protestant Missionary Societies of the

<sup>1</sup> In the *Nineteenth Century* of July 1888.

world have given an organized and authoritative reply to these questions. Their Centennial Conference, which assembled in London in June, devoted fifty meetings to a searching scrutiny into each department of missionary labour, and to the public statement of the results. Fourteen hundred delegates attended, from Europe, Great Britain, and America; each with his own special knowledge on one or other of the subjects dealt with. Of the  $2\frac{1}{4}$  millions sterling expended annually on Protestant Foreign Missions, over 2 millions were officially represented at the Congress. But the delegates brought to their task not only the collective authority of Protestant Christendom; they also brought their personal experience, gained in every outlying region of the earth. Certain of our High Church Societies, while expressing their sympathy, preferred not to send members. But with this exception, the International Conference seems to have fairly represented the sense of Protestant Christianity on the issues involved.

The first result of its scrutiny is to bring out certain fundamental differences in the problem of proselytism at the beginning and at the close of the period under its review. During the hundred years, the convictions of Christendom in regard to missionary work have undergone a profound change. When Carey, the father of Protestant missions in Bengal, propounded at the meeting of Baptist ministers a century ago the duty of preaching the Gospel to 'the heathen,' the aged president is said to have sprung up in displeasure and shouted: 'Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen He will do it without your aid or mine.' A second Pentecost, he thought, must precede such a work. To another pious Nonconformist divine the proposal suggested the thought, 'If the Lord would make windows in heaven might this thing be.' Ministers of the Kirk of Scotland, which has since laboured so nobly for the education of India, pronounced the idea to be 'highly preposterous,' and extolled the simple virtues of the untutored savage. A Bishop of the Church of England, the Church whose missionaries now compass the earth, argued publicly and powerfully in opposition to such schemes. The British nation as represented in Parliament declared against them. Its servants in the East regarded the missionaries as



dangerous breakers of the law. But for the benevolence of a Hindu money-changer the first English missionary family in Bengal would at one time have been without a roof. But for the courage of a petty Danish governor, the next missionary party would have been seized by our authorities in Calcutta and shipped back to Europe. A hundred years ago the sense of the Churches, the policy of Parliament, the instinct of self-preservation among the Englishmen who were doing England's work in distant lands, were all arrayed against the missionary idea.

The missionaries had to encounter not less hostile, and certainly better founded, prejudices among the non-Christian peoples to whom they went. For until a century ago the white man had brought no blessing to the darker nations of the earth. During three hundred years he had been the despoiler, the enslaver, the exterminator of the simpler races. The bright and brief episode in Pennsylvania stands out against a grim background of oppression and wrong. In America, ancient kingdoms and civilisations had been trodden out beneath the hoofs of the Spanish horse. In Africa, the white man had organized a great export trade in human flesh. In South Asia, cities had been sacked, districts devastated, by the Portuguese. Throughout the Eastern Ocean the best of the nations of Europe appeared as rapacious traders, the worst of them as pirates and buccaneers. In India, which was destined to be the chief field of missionary labour, the power had passed to the English without the sense of responsibility for using their power aright. During a whole generation the natives had learned to regard us as a people whose arms it was impossible to resist, and to whose mercy it was useless to appeal. Even the retired slavetrader of Bristol looked askance at the retired nabob from Bengal.

But just before the beginning of the century of missionary labour commemorated last month, Englishmen at home had grown alive to the wrongs which were being done in their name. And with this awakening of the political conscience of England, the religious conscience of England also awoke. At that time and ever since, the missionary impulse has been intimately associated with the national resolve to act rightly by the peoples

who have come under our sway. During a hundred years the missionaries have marched in the van of the noblest movements of England. In the abolition of slavery, in the education of India, in the exposure of the liquor traffic which is bringing ruin to the African races, in the protection of the aboriginal tribes for whose welfare England has made herself responsible in many parts of the world, the missionary voice has uniformly expressed the moral sense of the nation. It is because I recognise in missionary work an expiation of national wrongdoing in the past, and an aid to national right-doing in the future, because I honestly believe that the missionary instinct forms the necessary spiritual complement of the aggressive genius of our English race, that I, a plain secular person, venture to address persons like myself.

Whatever may be the statistical results of missionary labour, missionaries hold a very different position, in the opinion alike of Christendom and of the non-Christian peoples, from that which they held a hundred years ago. Many competent critics, clerical and lay, still decline to unreservedly accept their statements. But the character of the criticism to which those statements are subjected has changed. Sydney Smith's sneers at 'the religious hoy riding at anchor in the Hugli river' would now be regarded not only as in bad taste, but also as irrelevant. The majority of Englishmen are fairly satisfied that the work is in the right direction, and only doubtful as to the practical results. The ancient seats of orthodoxy which were the strongholds of contemptuous indifference to the missionary idea now send missions of their own. The Universities' Mission to Central Africa has its stations from among the rescued slaves of Zanzibar, inland to the very source of the slave trade, and is training up a native-ministry in its own theological college. The Oxford Brotherhood in Calcutta discloses the strange spectacle of men of birth and scholarship living in common a life of apostolic simplicity and self-sacrifice. The Cambridge brethren at Delhi present a not less attractive picture of culture and piety. Medical missionaries represent the hard-headed University intellect of the North. The missionary idea, once popularly associated with the Chadbands and Little Bethels, has taken root in our public schools. Eton has its vigorous

and most practical mission to the East of London; Harrow, Winchester, Charterhouse, Clifton, Marlborough, Haileybury, Wellington, and many other of our great seminaries of manliness and learning, each supports its own special work. The 'Year Book of the Church of England' gives the details of twenty-six Public School and College Missions, including several foreign ones, besides the three Oxford and Cambridge Missions mentioned above. The nation at large recognises with increasing liberality, if not with assured confidence, the claims of missionary effort. Carey's collection of 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* with which 'to convert the heathen' a century ago has grown into an annual income of 2¼ millions sterling from Protestant Christendom. The two half-starved preachers making indigo for a livelihood in 1795 have multiplied into an admirably equipped and strongly organized force of six thousand missionaries, aided by a trained native army of thirty thousand auxiliaries engaged in active work. Three million converts, or children of converts, have been added to Protestant Christianity within the hundred years.

Let us clearly understand what this last statement implies. Protestant apologists are accustomed to add up the number of the Protestant nations and confessions in the world, and to display the total as the strength of the Protestant Church. But we are assured by more careful statisticians that the actual number even of professing Protestants—that is to say, of real or nominal communicants—does not exceed thirty millions. If this estimate be correct, the three million converts from non-Christian religions assume a new significance. For it discloses not only that Protestant Christianity has received an enormous numerical increase of three million converts, but also that this increase bears an important ratio to the actual Protestant Church. So far as can be inferred from the available data, the statistical probability is that the darker races will within the next century constitute a very large proportion of the professing Protestants in the world. For the increase has of late years gone on with cumulative velocity. The missionaries claim, indeed, that their hundred years of labour have produced numerical results not inferior to the first century of Christianity. A comparison of this kind lies beyond the range of ascertained statistics. It receives coun-

tenance, however, from several more cautious inductions. The late Governor of the Punjab, a scholar and a careful thinker, comes to the conclusion that at no other period since the apostolic age has conversion gone on so quickly. In another great province of India, in which we can absolutely verify the rate of progress, the native Christians are increasing six times more rapidly than the general population.

To a man like myself who, during a quarter of a century, has watched the missionaries actually at their work, the statistics of conversions seem to form but a small part of the evidence. The advance which the missionaries have made in the good opinion of great non-Christian populations well qualified to judge, such as those of India and China, is even more significant than their advance in the good opinion of sensible people at home. I shall speak only of facts within my own knowledge. But I know of no class of Englishmen who have done so much to render the name of England, apart from the power of England, respected in India as the missionaries. I know of no class of Englishmen who have done so much to make the better side of the English character understood. I know of no class who have done so much to awaken the Indian intellect, and at the same time to lessen the dangers of the transition from the old state of things to the new. The missionaries have had their reward. No class of Englishmen receive so much unbought kindness from the Indian people while they live; no individual Englishmen are so honestly regretted when they die. What aged Viceroy ever received the posthumous honours of affection accorded to the Presbyterian Duff by the whole Native Press? What youthful administrator has in our days been mourned for by the educated non-Christian community as the young Oxford ascetic was mourned in Calcutta last summer? It matters not to what sect a missionary belongs. An orthodox Hindu newspaper, which had been filling its columns with a vigorous polemic entitled 'Christianity Destroyed,' no sooner heard of the death of Mr. Sherring than it published a eulogium on that missionary scholar. It dwelt on 'his learning, affability, solidity, piety, benevolence, and business capacity.' The editor, while a stout defender of his hereditary faith, regretted that 'so little of Mr. Sherring's teaching had fallen to his lot.' This was written of

a man who had spent his life in controversy with the uncompromising Brahmanism of Benares. But the missionary has won for himself the same respect in the South as in the North. If I were asked to name the two men who, during my service in India, have exercised the greatest influence on native development and native opinion in Madras, I should name, not a governor, nor any departmental head, but a missionary Bishop of the Church of England, and a missionary educator of the Scottish Free Kirk.

It is considerations of this class that lead many Indian administrators to bear public testimony in favour of missionary work. The careless onlooker may have no particular convictions on the subject, and flippant persons may ridicule religious effort in India as elsewhere. But I think that few Indian administrators have passed through high office, and had to deal with the ultimate problems of British government in that country, without feeling the value of the work done by the missionaries. Such men gradually realise, as I have realised, that the missionaries do really represent the spiritual side of the new civilisation and of the new life which we are introducing into India. This view is not the product of a Clapham clique, or of any narrow Evangelical tradition. It is possible that down to a certain period zeal rather than judgment may have influenced some of the witnesses, although the shrewd and hard sense of Lord Lawrence would certainly have laid bare imposture or exaggeration of whatever sort. But for twenty years the old Clapham Evangelicalism has been a discredited, and latterly almost a defunct, tradition in India, so far as the great body of the officials are concerned. The opinion of a Viceroy like Lord Northbrook, or of a clear-headed administrator like Robert Cust, on the actual value of Indian missionary work is beyond suspicion. Such men range themselves unhesitatingly, as at the late International Conference, on the side of the missionaries. But if you closely watch them you will find that whenever the spirit of bigotry is in the air they keep out of the way. They never make themselves a party to exaggeration; and if their authority is cited to support views of which they disapprove, they do not fear to protest. One of these gentlemen, at the risk of severing the ties of a lifetime, lately stood forth to

unhesitatingly expose what he believed to be the over-statements of the party to which he belonged. I have mentioned two names, because these names are public property in regard to missionary work. But they only form prominent names among a large body of Indian administrators who are deliberately convinced that the missionaries are doing for England the very best work which any private Englishmen can do in India. Mr. Cust took as the motto of his memorable missionary lecture to the youth of Oxford, *Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento.*

This national aspect of missionary work has been rather lost sight of amid the outburst of evangelical enthusiasm during the present century. But it is not a new view. Each of the great European nations who went forth to conquer the world in turn recognised the importance of disclosing the spiritual as well as the material side of its character to the subjected races. Religious instruction not less than military aggrandisement formed the basis of the Portuguese policy in India. Saint Francis Xavier wrote solemnly to King John in 1548 urging that the obligation of spreading Christianity 'rests upon the Viceroy,' and begging his Majesty to bind himself by oath to punish governors who neglected this duty with 'close imprisonment for many years.' In the next century, when the Dutch expelled the Portuguese from Ceylon, they established the reformed religion in that island, and required the conformity of the natives as a condition of civil employment. In 1649 the English Parliament passed an Act creating a 'Corporation for the Promoting and Propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England' among the Indian tribes. The *Unitas Fratrum*, or Moravian Brotherhood, which has since won the admiration of Christendom, commenced its missionary labours in 1732 among the slaves of the Danish West Indies, and well earned the official support which the Government of Denmark long gave to evangelistic enterprise. George the First of England addressed a royal letter to the missionaries at Tranquebar.

The ascendancy of the East India Company gradually arrayed the policy of Great Britain against attempts at proselytism, until at length Carey, at the end of the last century,

founded missionary work definitely on its proper basis of private Christian effort. No sensible man would now propose that the State should interfere; in India any such interference would be a political crime. But this should not make Englishmen blind to the fact that missionaries, especially in India, are doing a really national work: a work not necessarily of conversion, but of conciliation and concord. In spite of occasional disagreements, the missionaries are recognised by the natives as a spiritual link between the governing race and the governed. I believe that the three quarters of a million subscribed for missionary work in India strengthens England's position in that country in a greater measure than if the entire sum were handed over to the Government to be expended on education, or on the army, or on any administrative improvement whatsoever.

An important change has come over the methods of missionary work. It is not very long ago since the popular conception of the missionary, derived from many a frontispiece and vignette, was an excited preacher under a palm-tree. A half ring of blacks of a low physical type listened in attitudes of admiration. This may at one time have represented the facts; it may still represent the facts in parts of the world of which I have no knowledge. But in the great fields of missionary labour, in China, India, and throughout the Muhammadan countries—that is to say, in regard to the religions whose followers outnumber by eightfold the whole Protestant population of the world—it is a mere travesty of the truth. A merely zealous preacher would there find himself surrounded by no gaping circle of admirers, but by amused and caustic critics. As a matter of statistics, the old-fashioned form of 'simple preaching' failed to produce adequate results wherever it came in contact with educated races. Nearly three-quarters of the century commemorated by the International Conference had passed away, leaving only 14,000 Protestant native communicants in India. During the last thirty years more scientific methods gradually developed, and the number of native communicants increased close on tenfold to 138,000. Simple preaching often hit hard, and many a random shot told. But the leaders of the church militant now perceive that the Christian campaign must be fought with

weapons of precision. During the last twenty-five years the study of the Science of Religion, or, speaking more accurately, of the histories of religions, has profoundly modified missionary methods.

That study has led the world, and is compelling the Church, to acknowledge the good in other faiths. It has disclosed the services which all the greater religions have performed for mankind, the binding power which they supplied to the feeble social organizations of ancient days, the support which they gave to the nascent moral sense, the function which they have discharged in developing the ideas of national obligation and of domestic duty. It was these religions that removed the most important relationships of life, alike in the family and in the State, from the caprice of individual option, and gave security to human intercourse by sanctions which the individual man did not dare to challenge. For a moment it seemed that this recognition of the noble aspects of other faiths might enervate the energies of our own. One still remembers when Buddhism almost promised to become a fashion at Oxford, and only last autumn a Canon of York eloquently declared the merits of Muhammadanism in *The Times*. But all great religions, and especially the Christian religion, have proved that zeal is not incompatible with knowledge. Indeed, without the capacity for solving this permanent problem, no creed could continue great. The Science of Religion has now stated its main conclusions; but Christian missionary effort has enormously increased in volume, and has distinctly improved in character, quality, and results. It is by no accident that the editor of the 'Sacred Books of the East' is also the author of the 'Universal Missionary Alphabet.' Between the missionary conceptions of the beginning of the century and of the present day there is all the difference between St. Peter at Joppa and St. Paul on Mars' Hill. In the non-Christian religions the early Protestant missionaries beheld only unclean things, four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. The modern missionary to the Hindus takes the tone in which the great proselytising apostle addressed the Brahmans of Europe at Athens; he quotes their literature, and starting from their devotions at their own altars,



he labours to supplant an ignorant worship by an enlightened faith.

This is not the place, and I am not the person, to treat of the theological aspects of missionary work. But the Science of Religion, or more correctly the study of the development of religions, has armed the missionary with new weapons. In controversial combats it enables him to wield the sharp blade of historical criticism with an effectiveness hitherto unknown. In dealing with individual inquirers, it qualifies him to point out how the venerable structure of their ancestral belief was no supernatural edifice let down from heaven, but was distinctly and consciously put together at ascertained periods by human hands. In popular appeals, it gives him the means of accurately and powerfully pressing home the claims of the religion which he advocates as against those which he would supersede. For the great religions of the world took their present form in ages when mankind was very unhappy. In the East the logic of extremes accepted, once and for all, the conclusion that existence is in itself a long suffering, and extinction the sole deliverance. Hinduism and Buddhism embodied their deep despondency in different terms—Liberation, Absorption, or the Blowing-out of one's Being as a woman blows out a lamp. But underlying all their euphemisms is the one conviction that life is not, and cannot be, worth living. Christianity avoided the difficulty arising from the obvious miseries of mankind by another answer. From the first it declared that life might become worth living, if not here yet elsewhere; and the later developments of Christianity have directed their energies to make life worth living here also. Apart from other aspects, Christianity as a help to humanity is a religion of effort and hope; Hinduism and Buddhism are religions of resigned acceptance or of despair. They were true interpreters of Asiatic man's despondency of the possibilities of existence, in the age in which they arose. They are growing to be fundamentally at variance with the new life which we are awakening in India. I believe that Hinduism is still sufficiently plastic to adapt itself to this new world; that it has in it enough of the *vis medicatrix naturæ* to cast disused doctrines, and to develop new ones. But the process must be slow and difficult. Christianity comes to the Indian races in an

age of new activity and hopefulness, as a fully equipped religion of effort and of hope. And it comes to them in a spirit of conciliation which it did not disclose before. It thus presents its two most practical claims on human acceptance. For, although to a fortunate minority Christianity may be a religion of faith, yet I think that to most of us it is rather a religion of hope and of charity.

I should not be candid if I left the impression that I expect, even with the present improved missionary methods, any large accession from orthodox Hinduism or Islam to the Christian Church. It is rather from the low castes and the so-called aboriginal peoples that I believe direct conversions will chiefly come. At this moment there are fifty millions of human beings in India sitting abject on the outskirts of Hinduism, or beyond its pale, who within the next fifty years will incorporate themselves in one or other of the higher faiths. Speaking humanly, it rests with Christian men and women in England, and with Christian missionaries in India, whether a great proportion of these fifty millions shall accept Christianity or Hinduism or Islam. But, apart from direct conversion, the indirect influence of missionaries is a factor of increasing power in the religious future of India. The growth of new theistic sects among the Hindus, such as the Brahma Samaj, under the impulse of Christian teaching, has long been a familiar phenomenon. The Centennial Missionary Conference brought to light corresponding movements among the Muhammadans. The account given by an eye-witness, of exceptional opportunities for observation and of most commendable caution in statement, regarding the growth of a critical historical school among the Muhammadans in Southern Indian was very significant. In Islam, as in Hinduism, there is an enlightened party who are shaking off the trammels of old superstitions, and are labouring to bring their hereditary faith into accord with the requirements of the times. The treatises which Indian Muhammadans have lately published to disprove the formerly accepted duty of Jihad, or war against the unbelievers, indicate a political aspect of the new school. It would be untrue to allege that the new school, either among the Hindus or the Muhammadans, shows a tendency to accept the Christian faith. It would be hazardous to assert

that they are a direct outcome of missionary teaching. But it is certain that the leader of the new Muhammadan school in the south, and the chief Hindu reformers in the north, are men who have been in close contact with missionaries, and who, as to the methods employed and the results obtained, are powerful, even when unwilling, witnesses to missionary influence.

To the more enthusiastic advocates of Christian proselytism such a statement may seem vague and perhaps discouraging. But any gain in precision could only be attained by a sacrifice of accuracy. In a country like India, where many new influences are at work, it is not safe to single out any one of them as the cause of complex religious and national movements. We only know that the State does not and cannot give spiritual teaching in its schools; and that, as respects the higher education of the people, the missionary colleges alone redeem Western instruction from its purely secular character. We also know that the modern Indian reformers, whether of Hinduism or of Islam, or of social hardships like those inflicted by child marriage and the enforced celibacy of widows, are almost invariably men who have been educated in missionary schools or colleges, or who in adult life have deeply conversed with missionaries on the subjects in regard to which they stand forth to lead and enlighten their countrymen. The indirect results of a great spiritual influence, like that of the missionaries, among a susceptible and profoundly religious Asiatic people do not admit of being expressed in compact formulæ. At the same time I feel that both the supporters and the critics of missionary enterprise have a right to demand some statement of direct results. I shall therefore take the country with reference to which I have personal knowledge, the largest field of missionary labour in the world, and almost the only one in which we can test missionary statistics by a periodical census conducted by official experts. I shall briefly state the facts of missionary progress in India from 1851 to 1881. These thirty years include the whole period for which verified statistics exist, down to the most recent census.

In 1851, the Protestant missions in India and Burma had 222 stations; in 1881, their stations had increased nearly three-

fold to 601. But the number of their churches or congregations had, during the same thirty years, multiplied from 267 to 4,180, or over fifteen-fold. There is not only a vast increase in the number of stations, but also a still greater increase in the work by each station within itself. In the same way, while the number of native Protestant Christians increased from 91,092 in 1851 to 492,882 in 1881, or fivefold, the number of communicants increased from 14,661 to 138,254, or nearly tenfold. The progress is again, therefore, not alone in numbers, but also in pastoral care and internal discipline. During the same thirty years, the pupils in mission schools multiplied by threefold from 64,043 to 196,360. These enormous increments have been obtained by making a larger use of native agency. A native Protestant Church has, in truth, grown up in India, capable of supplying, in a large measure, its own staff. In 1851 there were only 21 ordained native ministers; by 1881 they had increased to 575, or twenty-sevenfold. The number of native lay preachers had risen during thirty years from 493 to the vast total of 2,856. In the opinion of the most cautious of the Anglo-Indian bishops, the time is close at hand, or has already arrived, when this great body of Indian converts and of Indian clergy and lay preachers ought to be represented in the episcopate. It is hoped that the Pan-Anglican Synod, now assembling at Canterbury, will find itself able to come to some distinct declaration regarding the appointment of native bishops for the native Church of India.

The foregoing figures are compiled from returns carefully collected from every missionary station in India and Burmah. The official census, notwithstanding its obscurities of classification and the disturbing effects of the famine of 1877, attests the rapid increase of the Christian population. So far as these disturbing influences allow of an inference for all British India, the normal rate of increase among the general population was about 8 per cent. from 1872 to 1881, while the actual rate of the Christian population was over 30 per cent. But taking the lieutenant-governorship of Bengal as the greatest province outside the famine area of 1877, and for whose population, amounting to one-third of the whole of British India, really comparable statistics exist, the census results are clear. The general popu-

lation increased in the nine years preceding 1881 at the rate of 10·89 per cent., the Muhammadans at the rate of 10·96 per cent., the Hindus at some undetermined rate below 13·64 per cent., the Christians of all races at the rate of 40·71 per cent., and the native Christians at the rate of 64·07 per cent.

As regards progress, therefore, the missionaries in India may well look back with thankfulness to the past and with hopefulness to the future. But some of my Hindu friends, when I first published these figures, correctly pointed out that they have another aspect. For, although the rate of increase is great, the net result is small indeed compared with the population of India. They hold that half a million Protestant converts out of two hundred and fifty millions of people is no source of alarm to Hinduism or Islam, and should be a subject of very modest self-gratulation to Christianity. They regard this result with equanimity as a moderate and natural product of the capital expended, and of the energy, ability, and really friendly nature of the agency employed. They point to their own religious activity during the same period, and to the larger totals which have been added to the two great native faiths. They have little fear of Christian effort in the future, because they believe that that effort, although strongly supported by money and made honourable by the lives and characters of its men, does not proceed upon lines likely to lead to important results.

A new form of missionary effort has arisen in India. The great Evangelical societies, to whom the rapid progress of the past thirty years has been chiefly due, go on with their work more actively than ever. But side by side with them, small Christian brotherhoods are springing up—ascetic fraternities living in common, and realising the Indian ideal of the religious life. In Bombay, in Calcutta, in Delhi, certain houses of Christian celibate brethren are becoming recognised centres of influence among the Indian university youth. They consist of English gentlemen of the highest culture, who have deliberately made up their minds to give their lives without payment to the work. They are indifferent to hardships, fearless of disease, extraordinarily patient of labour, and in no hurry to produce results. The

Cambridge mission at Delhi has got into its hands the chief share in the University teaching in the ancient Mughal capital. Six hundred students in its college and a well-filled hostel attest the confidence which it has gained with the upper and educated classes, notwithstanding its public training of a constant supply of Christian native youth as masters for the provincial schools. The Oxford brethren in Calcutta, while conducting a purely Christian seminary, exert their special influence by discussions and personal interviews with the graduates and undergraduates of the University. Every afternoon a brother sits waiting to see any young man who cares to call, and to talk with him on any question which he chooses to start. If he wishes to be alone with the missionary, no one else is present : if two or three youths come together, the missionary is equally at their service. Some of these young men have told me of the patience, the humility, and the dexterous Socratic methods with which their doubts and difficulties are treated. No one is pushed or hustled to desert his ancestral faith. But everyone carries away material for deep reflection. Student clubs formed under the auspices of the Oxford brotherhood diffuse the effects produced by this private teaching. At their meetings and lectures the brethren meet the Calcutta undergraduates on the common ground of intellectual men interested in the subjects of the day. Young Hindus at the University are anxious not only to listen to them, but to dwell together subject to strict moral regulations under their supervision, if the houses could be procured.

The relations of the Oxford fraternity to the natives are of the courteous Pauline type ; the unclean-beast theory regarding non-Christian religions is conspicuously and conscientiously absent. When I was asked to become president of a Hindu society formed in connection with them, I thought it discreet to first look through the reports and epistles of the mission. From first to last I did not come upon the word 'heathen.' One of the offshoots of this activity is a students' club for the critical study of Jesus Christ. I am informed that its members are, with a few exceptions, non-Christian graduates or undergraduates of the University. What should we think if a society arose among the English University youth to seriously and accurately

inquire into the teaching of Buddha? The truth is that the example of these Oxford men's lives, their simple and unostentatious asceticism, their daily service to others without a thought of themselves, are creating a deep impression. Their deaths produce a deeper impression still. It would be unwise to overrate the narrow sphere within which they at present work. But it is difficult to over-estimate the value of their influence within that sphere. I myself do not expect that any Englishman, or any European, will in our days individually bring about a great Christian awakening in India. But I think it within reasonable probability that some native of India will spring up, whose life and preaching may lead to an accession on a great scale to the Christian Church. If such a man arises he will set in motion a mighty movement, whose consequences it is impossible to foresee. And I believe that, if ever he comes, he will be produced by influences and surroundings of which the Oxford brotherhood in Calcutta is at present the forerunner and prototype.

It is to be regretted that this new form of missionary effort was not represented at the Congress of last month. At the same time it is not difficult to appreciate the reasons which led the ascetic Christian brotherhoods, and several of the High-Church societies, to abstain from that public demonstration. One cannot help feeling that such gatherings sometimes fail to disclose the most genuine aspects of missionary work. In their eagerness to intensify enthusiasm and to prove their case, they are liable to lapse into methods not calculated to carry conviction to minds which are simply desirous to get at the facts. The first Open Conference, for example, dealt with a controversy which had filled many columns of *The Times* and which has since occupied the thoughts of serious men in many lands. Is it true, or is it not true, that the non-Christian races of the world are being rapidly absorbed into Islam, and that Muhammadanism, by its discountenance of strong drink, exercises on the whole a higher moral influence than Christianity? Here were distinct issues in regard to which dignitaries of the Church, experienced travellers, and others well qualified to speak had ranged themselves on opposite sides. They were issues which delegates from the missionary societies of Europe and America

had come to debate. Many of these gentlemen brought the careful observation of a lifetime to the subject, and a little pile of cards had been handed up to the chairman by those who wished to take part in the discussion. Yet, with the full knowledge that the time allowed for the meeting was strictly limited by the hands of the clock, certain zealous persons, in the body of the hall, insisted on interrupting the proceedings by a resolution demanding an interval for prayer. It is clearly right that such a meeting should commence and should close with an act of devotion. But it is most damaging to the missionary cause that a series of careful statements of evidence should be broken in upon by an irrelevant resolution of this sort. In any other class of meeting a chairman would decorously ignore such a proposal. But at Exeter Hall he is made to feel that this course is not open to him. A speaker who followed with a unique personal knowledge of the facts was coldly received, and some of the subsequent proceedings had a declamatory character adapted rather to elicit cheers than to leave behind conviction.

I am convinced that the really noble work done by the missionaries abroad often suffers, in the opinion of candid and serious men, from the methods employed at home. It suffers also from a vague but general impression that only a part of the evidence appears. It is well known that many experienced missionaries believe the chief obstacles to the spread of Christianity are to be found in certain degrading customs and institutions which make themselves specially prominent in Christian communities. Among this class of thinkers, the Professor of Chinese at Oxford holds a distinguished place. His thirty-four years of successful labour as a missionary, his erudition, his orthodoxy, and the unrivalled position which he holds as the translator and expounder of the sacred books of China, give weight and authority to his views. He holds that as long as Christianity presents itself infected with the bitter internal animosities of the Christian sects, and associated with the habits of drunkenness and the social evil conspicuous among Christian nations, it will not do its work, because it does not deserve to do its work, in the non-Christian world. When Professor Legge was asked to take part in the Centennial Conference, he



explained that he would have to clearly put forward his convictions—with the result that he did not take part in it at all. It may be that some of the ground which he would have occupied lay beyond its scope, and could not be satisfactorily dealt with by it. But incidents like these, although perhaps isolated ones, tend to weaken the authority of such an assemblage, and to create a suspicion among fair-minded men that they have not been placed in full possession of the facts.

I have thought it right to refer to these defects because I feel that I should be chargeable with the same one-sided advocacy if I feared to raise my voice against them. I think that the late Congress, in its fifty meetings, gave a true and, on the whole, an accurate and a complete presentment of missionary work. I know that its projectors and managers were sincerely desirous to overstate nothing and to conceal nothing. But I cannot help feeling that these good intentions were sometimes overborne by the old hankering after unctuous declamation which at one time made missionary statements sneered at even by clergymen, and suspected by all accurate critics, whether clerical or lay. The able biographer of Carey has acknowledged that occasion was given by at least one coadjutor of that truly great man for Sydney Smith's ridicule. The time has come for missionaries themselves, and for those who have watched the simple and noble spirit in which they labour, to protest against every form of exaggeration or insincerity in popular expositions of their work. They must purge their cause of bigotry and cant. Of bigotry, such as the injustice which some pious people in England do to the Roman Catholic clergy in India; to that great Church which is quietly and with small worldly means educating, disciplining, and consoling a Christian population three times more numerous than all the Protestant converts in India put together. Of cant, such as the tirades against caste and other indigenuous institutions, which accomplish for a densely crowded tropical population what the Primitive Church did for its own little communities, and what later Christianity fails to effect, namely, to support the poor without State aid. You may pass a whole life in contact with the missionaries who are doing the actual toil, without having to listen to a single insincerity. The results of their labour need neither over-statement nor concealment. I believe that

those results justify the expenditure of money, and the devotion of the many lives, by which they are obtained. And I am convinced that, if Englishmen at home knew the missionaries simply as they are, there would be less doubt as to the merit of their claims and as to the genuine character of their work.

## VII

### A FORGOTTEN OXFORD MOVEMENT<sup>1</sup>

WHEN examining the Indian manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, I came across a curious series of documents. They commence with a letter from the Bishop of Oxford to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1681, setting forth a scheme for the spread of the Christian faith in India. They disclose the steps by which the East India Company was induced to place itself at the head of the association then formed, and to take charge of its funds. They conclude with a statement of expenditure; an undated account, but apparently made up in the year 1710. Taken together with the manuscript minutes in the India Office, they record a phase of our early dealings with India which has hitherto escaped notice.

The Baptists claim, and justly claim, the honour of the first regular organization for a supply of English missionaries to India in 1792. During the preceding century efforts of a less direct character had not been wanting. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, founded in 1698, appointed an Indian Committee in 1709, and in 1710 began to send money to the Danish Missionaries in Tranquebar. Ziegenbalg, the Lutheran apostle to the East, sought help in London, and delivered his famous 'Malabaric Speech,' perhaps not the less impressive because in an unknown tongue, before the society in 1715. When the Danish missionaries in Southern India were almost perishing from want, after the death of Ziegenbalg in 1719, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge undertook their permanent maintenance. Schwartz, the founder of

<sup>1</sup> In the *Fortnightly Review* of May 1896.

the Tinevelli Mission in 1750, was furnished forth and supported at its expense. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, incorporated by Royal Charter in 1701, also helped the Danish mission to India with a subscription of 20% in the early years of the eighteenth century, and it eventually took over that mission from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1824. But the labours of these two sister societies from 1709 onwards, by means of Danish or German agents, do not detract from the claims of the Baptists as the pioneers of strictly British missions to India in 1792.

The documents now brought to light in the Bodleian Library and the India Office take us back to a much earlier date. They show that the first English association for the spread of the Christian faith in India originated with Oxford men. It formed, in fact, one of the many 'Oxford Movements' in the centuries before that term was invented. They also exhibit the East India Company in a new aspect. The Company has always been portrayed as unfriendly to evangelistic work in India, and the experiences of the Baptist missionaries on their arrival in 1793 support this view. The present papers disclose the difference between the Company in 1681, when it had only to regard its duties in India from the standpoint of British merchants, and the Company a hundred years later, when it had to regulate its action by the responsibility for keeping peace among its Indian subjects and by its pledges of non-interference with their customs and creeds.

The first letter from Fell, Bishop of Oxford, to Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, is dated June 21, 1681,<sup>1</sup> and runs as follows :

'May it please your Grace,

'I gave you the trouble of a letter by the last post, and should not have bin so soon importunate, but that an unexpected occasion has happened, which may prove of concernment to the public, and which ought to proceed with your Grace's privity and guidance. That your Grace may have a perfect knowledge of the affair, I shall present you with a narrative of every step that has bin made in it. The evening before I left

<sup>1</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xxxvi. p. 61. Bodleian Library.

London I went to take my leave of Mr. Boyle, with whom I had long agoe contracted an acquaintance when he dwelt in this place [Oxford].

‘It so happened that we fell into discourse of the East India Company, and I enlarged upon the shame that lay upon us, who had so great opportunities by our commerce in the East, that we had attempted nothing towards the Conversion of the Natives, when not only the papists, but even the Hollanders had laboured herein. While I was upon this argument Dr. Burnet came in and heard the remainder of it. The effect of the discourse at that time was, that Mr. Boil (*sic*) immediately assigned a hundred pound which lay in Mr. Robert Clayton’s hands, towards the encouragement of such as should learn the Malaian language and fit themselves for the service of God in the East. Since then Dr. Burnet having an occasion of speaking with Sir Josiah Child, Governour of the East India Company, reported to him what had past at Mr. Boyle’s, which he seemed affected with. Whereupon Dr. Burnet about ten daies since wrot to me and gave me notice of what had past, adding that he verily believed that if I would write to Sir Josiah Child, he would be induced to do somewhat that would be considerable.

‘I thought with myself that the loss of a letter was not to be put in balance with the possibility of a real advantage, especially one to the public; and accordingly I wrote, and by the last post am informed by Dr. Burnet that on Friday last a committee of the Company was called and he directed to attend. Where being called in he was told that the proposition which I had made was unanimously entertained by the Company; that they had appointed a sub-committee to form a design, and raise a fund, which the Governour hoped would rise to five thousand pounds, wherewith they would buy actions which would render 10 or 20 per cent. With these sums they would maintain in the University young scholars who should be instructed in the principles of religion and the Malaian language. There are other particulars concerning the translation of the Gospel, and Psalms and Catechism, and printing them; with grammars, vocabularies, and other subsidiary books, of which Dr. Burnet will be able to give your Grace a more distinct account. How

far this very unexpected affair may proceed, and how 'tis to be managed and advanced, your Grace will best judge. The whole thing being undesigned and providential will, I hope, not look like meddling and business in the concerns of others.'

Signed, Jo. Oxon.

The writer of this letter, Dr. John Fell, was perhaps the most prominent Oxford man of his day. Son of the loyal Dean of Christ Church, and himself admitted as a student on that foundation at the age of eleven, he took his degree of M.A. at eighteen, when already in arms for King Charles. Of the hundred students of Christ Church, Fell and nineteen others were officers; the rest, almost to a man, served in the royal cause. Ejected from his studentship by the Puritans, Fell and two friends kept up the daily ritual of the Church throughout the Commonwealth. The picture of the three young divines hangs over the great stone fireplace in Christ Church hall. On the Restoration Fell became Dean of Christ Church, afterwards Vice-Chancellor of the University, and in 1675 Bishop of Oxford, retaining the deanery *in commendam*. Cuddesdon Palace rebuilt, and the lofty gate-tower of Christ Church, to which he transferred Great Tom after repeatedly recasting it, form the most conspicuous of the edifices that rose under his hands. His statue adorns the 'Killcanon' archway in the great quadrangle, and his spare scholarly face still looks forth from four portraits or replicas in the deanery and hall of Christ Church.

Among his many-sided activities, from reforming discipline in the University and editing the *Fathers*, to 'The Interest of England Stated,' 'The Vanity of Scoffing,' and the 'Ladies' Calling,' plans for the spread of the faith in India held an important place. He presented to the University a set of types in Arabic, from which he hoped that the Bible might be published in the Eastern tongues. A Malayan translation of the Gospels and Acts was issued by the Oxford press, apparently from the Bishop's Arabic founts supplemented by a few additional letters, in 1677.

In this work he was associated with the Honourable Robert Boyle, at whose house the meeting described in the foregoing letter took place. Boyle, the chief founder of the Royal Society,

held a position among philosophers and men of science not less distinguished than that of Fell in the English ecclesiastical world. During his long residence in Oxford, from 1654 to 1668, he came under Fell's influence, and in 1677 he commended to the East India Company a plan which he had discussed with the Bishop of Oxford for the propagation of the Gospel in the East Indies. He reported that Bishop Fell would undertake to fit men for the purpose at the University 'not only with Arabic, but, if it were desired, with arithmetic.' Boyle spoke with authority, as a Director of the company, whose family influence had helped it to obtain its charter from Charles II. in 1661, and as the first Governor of the Society for the spread of the faith in New England, re-incorporated by the same monarch.

The third actor on the scene, set forth in the Bishop of Oxford's letter, is Dr. Gilbert Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury and historian of his Own Times, whose perfervid Scottish energy launched him into every philanthropic movement, and into not a few political intrigues. Burnet had met Fell during his first visit to England in 1663, and he was in close sympathy with the Bishop of Oxford's schemes for the spread of the faith in India. But the wary bishop made the disclaimer at the end of his letter to Sancroft against anything 'like meddling and business in the concerns of others,' not without reason; for Charles II. had struck Burnet's name off the list of his chaplains on the ground of being 'too busy.'

The Bishop of Oxford's proposals were warmly taken up by the East India Company. On June 17, 1681, its Court of Committees<sup>1</sup> considered the plan submitted by Fell 'for propagating the Christian religion among the natives in India.' That plan included, first, 'The education of four or more scholars in Oxford in the knowledge of the Eastern languages and in divinity, to fit them to serve the Company as chaplains in the East Indies.' Second, 'The erecting of free schools in India.' Third, 'The printing design' for the translation and distribution of the Gospel in the Eastern languages. Grants of money to missionaries were subsequent developments.

The Court referred the working out of the scheme to a sub-committee, with the Earl of Berkeley at its head. The decision

<sup>1</sup> *Court Books, India Office MS. Records.*

arrived at on July 6, 1681,<sup>1</sup> was that the East India Company should undertake the management of the missionary fund, without entering into any engagement 'by what methode, or by whose advice, they or their successors shall or will carry on the designed charitable and pious work. But only that they will doe it faithfully according to the best of their judgements and understandings, without making any kind of gain thereof to themselves.' During the lifetime of Sancroft, Fell, Burnet, and certain other divines, all moneys were to be expended under their advice.

The Bishop of Oxford and his agent in London, the ever-active Burnet, did not allow the matter to rest here. On August 6, 1681, Fell, after referring to 'our printing design,' was able to inform Sancroft 'that the East India Company have at last actually subscribed several sums of money for the maintenance of young men to be educated here [Oxford] in order to the better serving of God in their Factories,' and that the Court of Directors will accept 'such nominations as your Grace, my Lord of London, and myself shall make.'<sup>2</sup>

The final step was taken in the following year, when the Company resolved to open a permanent subscription list for the purpose. The bishop's copy of the proceedings<sup>3</sup> has an incomplete date, as the edges are frayed off, owing to its having fallen into the Thames, with other of the Tanner manuscripts, on their transit by water to Oxford. But the India Office Minutes record a regular bond of agreement adopted on May 3, 1682.<sup>4</sup> It recites the Bishop of Oxford as the originator of the scheme, and the propagation of the faith in the East Indies as its object.

'We, the East India Adventurers, and others, being moved thereunto by the Court of Committees upon the aforesaid proposal made unto them, Doe hereby undertake for ourselves severally, and not jointly one for another, That during the continuance of the present joint Stock, and our having an interest or share of adventure therein, we will yearly pay unto the Cashire Generall of the East India Company for the time being, such several sums of money as at present we have sub-

<sup>1</sup> *Court Books, India Office MS. Records.* Also *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xxxvi. p. 67. Bodleian Library.

<sup>2</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xxxvi. p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> *Court Books, India Office MS. Records.*



scribed, or such sums annually as we shall think fit, for the education and instruction of young Scholars in both or either of the Universities in the Eastern languages, and such other pious uses of the same kinde, as the Court of Committees shall from time to time think fit.’

The first subscription list under this bond<sup>1</sup> is headed by Sir Josiah Child, the Governor of the East India Company, the Earl of Berkeley, Sir John Banks, Sir Joseph Ashe, and Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, each of whom give ten pounds per annum. Many other members of the Company subscribe from ten to three pounds. Nor was the list altogether confined to merchants engaged in the East India trade. The Ladies Arabella and Henrietta Berkeley are entered for five pounds each per annum ; the never-failing Burnet gives three pounds a year.

In 1682, therefore, the East India Company formally embarked on ‘that pious design for propagating the Christian religion in the East Indies, proposed by the Right Reverend Father in God, John Lord Bishop of Oxon.’<sup>2</sup> Its materials for the enterprise at starting consisted of the Malay translation of the Gospels and Acts issued by the Oxford Press five years previously, and the teaching afforded by the Laudian professorship of Arabic, founded in 1637 ; Bishop Fell’s offer to train four or more scholars at Oxford for the work ; Boyle’s gift of 100*l.*, together with donations from other members of the East India Company which, it was hoped, would reach 5,000*l.* ; and a first subscription list by leading members of the Company yielding an income of 161*l.* per annum. To what amount this list eventually reached does not appear.

In order to understand the subsequent history of the movement, three things must be borne in mind. Its master-spirit, John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, died only four years later, in 1686. The charter of the Company lapsed in 1693, although revived under limitations ; a new Company was incorporated in 1698, and the old joint-stock, during the continuance of which the subscriptions were alone promised, soon ceased to have a separate existence. While these events were taking place in England a third set of causes operated even more powerfully from the East,

<sup>1</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xxxvi. p. 69 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Court of Committees holden the 3rd May, 1682.

arising out of the situation of the English in India and the necessities which it imposed.

We shall best obtain an insight into that situation by confining our view to a single one of the Company's settlements. Its headquarters in Bengal were then in the town of Hugli, twenty-seven miles up the river from the present Calcutta. The internal economy of the Factory was that of a college for the purposes of trade. The whole English community dwelt within the Factory walls, except senior married officers specially allowed to live outside. A strict rule was maintained as to the allotment of the twenty-four hours for work, meals, and rest. After attending public prayers, the joint labours of the morning began at nine, or in certain seasons at ten o'clock. At mid-day all dined in a common hall, seated in exact order of seniority. On finishing their afternoon work they took the exercise of shooting at butts. A common supper in hall and evening prayers brought the day to a close. At nine o'clock the Factory gates were shut. The few married seniors exempted from the strict rule still retained their right to the privileges of the collegiate life, and received diet money, candles and servants' wages in lieu of the common meals.

The governing body of this compact community consisted of a chief or president and council who ruled over the general body of merchants, factors, writers, and apprentices engaged in carrying on the trade of the Factory. Outside Englishmen attempting to traffic in Bengal were regarded as 'Interlopers,' fair objects of persecution, and liable to deportation if the Company's servants found themselves strong enough to enforce the orders of their Honourable Masters to that effect. In such a scheme of collegiate life during the seventeenth century a chaplain formed an important officer. The records of the Levant Company, which traded on a somewhat similar plan, disclose a regular succession of chaplains attached to its settlements—nineteen at Constantinople from 1611 to 1691, with separate supplies for Aleppo and Smyrna. The East India Company also maintained clergymen at its principal settlements on the Madras and Bombay coasts. In 1678 it sent out its first chaplain to the more recently established Factory in Bengal, the Rev. John Evans, of Jesus College, Oxford, on the

recommendation of Sir Joseph Ashe, who figures as one of the principal subscribers to the Bishop of Oxford's missionary scheme, three years later.

The duties of the chaplain were to enforce an orderly life within what we may call the trading college, and he received a position which gave weight to his authority. He ranked as third in precedence, and his pay (100*l.* a year with liberal allowances) was, until 1682, about equal to that of the chief of the Factory. A code of regulations promulgated at Hugli in 1679 provided for the punishment of any inmate guilty of swearing, drunkenness, or profanation of the Lord's Day, and for breaches of collegiate discipline, such as being 'out of the house or from their lodging late at nights, or absent from morning or evening prayers.' The penalties consisted of fines: ten rupees (1*l.* 5*s.*) for staying out after the gates were locked at nine o'clock; 5*s.* for drunkenness; 1*s.* for profane swearing; 1*s.* for lying; and 1*s.* for shirking morning or evening prayers. The fines were to be applied to the relief of the indigent; and the funds of the first Overseers of the Poor in Bengal, indeed of the earliest charitable institution in Calcutta, were obtained from this source. If the fines were not paid on demand, they were levied by distraint on the culprit's goods. Failing this, 'the offender shall sett in ye stocks six hours, or suffer imprisonment until payment.'<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that such a plan of life had no place for anyone not in the service of the Company and under its direct control. An independent Protestant missionary could not then have existed in Bengal. What the Bishop of Oxford contemplated in 1681 was to use the Company's chaplains as missionaries, and to train them for spreading the faith among the heathen. It was to this proposal that the Company gave its hearty support. The idea was not altogether a new one; indeed, the Company's original invitation to the two Universities on February 13, 1657-8, to supply candidates for its chaplaincies opens thus: 'The East India Company have resolved to endeavour the advance and spreading of the Gospell in India.' But its efforts at conversion were practically confined to the

<sup>1</sup> *Hugli Diary*, December 12, 1679. India Office MSS. Also Wilson's *Bengal Public Consultations*, i, 69.

Portuguese Catholics within its settlements, as is indicated by the preamble to its Resolution of July 6, 1670, appointing one of its chaplains at Bombay to undertake this special duty: 'The Court being desirous that the Portuguezes residing in the Island of Bombay may be instructed in the Protestant religion, and that the true worship of God may be taught and promoted among them,' &c. It must be remembered that any religion which differed widely from the Protestant varieties recognised in England, seemed to our orthodox ancestors as little better than no religion at all. In 1698, when the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge started, its proselytizing efforts were mainly directed to the papists and to the Quakers who, in Dr. Bray's words, 'May be looked upon as a heathen nation.'

But the Company's good intentions, even although confined to the 'Portuguezes,' had, up to 1681, borne little fruit. The truth is that the Company's chaplains found more than enough work among their own countrymen in India. The sickness and mortality in the early British settlements were on a scale which we now find difficult to realise. Captain Hamilton relates how, in one year in Calcutta, there were 1,250 English residents in August and 450 burials before the following January. The ministrations to the sick and dying of their own faith left the chaplains no leisure for enterprises against other religions. Nor did the Company find it easy to secure the performance of their chaplains' duties to their own countrymen. Suitable clergymen were not always to be had, and the Puritan leaven worked strange disturbances in the Indian Factories.

For example, a remonstrance from the Company's servants on the Madras coast in 1669 to Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury (well remembered as Warden of All Souls, and builder, on Fell's prompting, of the Sheldonian theatre at Oxford), complained that two laymen had been sent out as ministers. These worthies refused to use the liturgy or to 'Baptise, marry or bury, as by law established.' 'We therefore make it our humble request and desire to the Honourable Company, that as we do and have in this farr country served them both to the hazard of Lives and Estates, they would, for the service of God in the first place, and next the comfort of our Soules and Honour of the Gospell amongst the Heathen,'

recall the two lay officiants, and send out properly-ordained ministers.<sup>1</sup> The remonstrance is signed, among others, by Jeremy Sambrooke, who, as we have seen, entered his name for ten pounds a year in the first subscription list for the Bishop of Oxford's scheme in 1682. The language of the remonstrants may not form a perfect specimen of English. But their grievance proved a real one, and it was redressed by an Order of Council passed in the presence of King Charles II. himself, his brother the Duke of York, his Highness Prince Rupert, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other great dignitaries of the realm.<sup>2</sup>

But the Company had difficulties with its chaplains more serious than points of doctrine. Its servants in India were permitted—indeed, at one time, were encouraged—to trade on their own account, and some reverend gentlemen took advantage of this privilege to the utmost. Mr. Evans, the first chaplain to Bengal, drew on himself the wrath of his Honourable Masters for a graver offence. He seems to have been an able and energetic man. His friends declared that he 'ever had greatly at heart to fulfil the ministry.' He was certainly a capable man of business, trafficking with a vigour and success that stirred up jealousy among his fellow-servants in the Factory less fortunate in their private ventures. They accused him of too intimate relations with the Interlopers or Free-merchants who traded to India in defiance of the Company's authority and denied the validity of the Company's charter.

The Rev. Mr. Evans<sup>3</sup> shared in the general flight of the Company's servants in 1688, when, driven forth from Bengal by the Mughal general, they put the remnant of their goods into their ships and sailed away in despair to Madras. On their return to the Hugli River in 1690 they built a Factory among the group of mud hamlets which have since grown into Calcutta. During their absence 'a nest of Interlopers' had established itself at their old Factory, higher up the river in Hugli town. These Free-merchants bought the favour of the native Governor

<sup>1</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xlv. pp. 96, 100.

<sup>2</sup> 'At the Court at Whitehall the 13th of October, 1669.' *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xlv. p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Hunter's *History of British India*, vol. ii. p. 271.

by bribes, and the Company's servants settled miserably amid incessant rain on their new site, with no weathertight building to shelter them, but 'only tents, hutts, and boats.' The Rev. Mr. Evans did not return with them on their forlorn hope. He stayed on to trade and administer spiritual consolations in Madras, and when he re-appeared in Bengal in 1693 he joined his old allies, the Interlopers, and took up his abode among them in Hugli town. He appears to have occasionally visited Calcutta in a clerical capacity; but the Company deemed him disloyal to their interests, and he practically passed to the enemy's camp. It could not, however, adopt the rough-and-ready methods to a chaplain by which it coerced other of its servants who incurred displeasure. For a chaplain, if summarily dismissed and deported to England, might carry his own story to the bishops, and enlist on his side ecclesiastical forces which the Company, with its disputed charter, was unwilling to encounter. As a matter of fact, it vented its ill-will against Evans in mild sarcasms about 'the merchant parson,' and 'quondam minister but late great merchant,' and merely stopped his pay. In this it showed worldly wisdom, for the enriched Welshman had strong friends. On his return home he received good preferment, became Bishop of Bangor, and was translated to Meath, the premier bishopric in Ireland.

The situation in India, therefore, rendered it necessary that any English clergyman who went thither must go in the Company's service, or practically as one of its chaplains. It was this consideration which made the Court of Committees so careful to reserve absolute power to itself when adopting the Bishop of Oxford's 'pious design' in 1681. It would bind neither itself nor its successors to any definite scheme of management.

I shall now briefly examine how far that design was actually carried out. It should not be forgotten that the Bishop of Oxford's proposals in 1681 were only the final form of a plan for the propagation of the faith in India which he had long revolved in his mind, and which his friend Boyle had, under his influence, already urged on the Company in 1677.<sup>1</sup> Its ground-

<sup>1</sup> *Letter from the Honourable Robert Boyle to Robert Thompson, Esq.* Dated Pall Mall, March, 1676-7.

work was the diffusion of translations of the Gospel. The Malayan version, issued at Oxford in the same year, was 'sent all over the East Indies.' But unfortunately the Malay tongue was as little known on the Indian continent as on the European one, and however serviceable it might have been in the Dutch settlements of the distant Archipelago, it was a dumb voice in India itself. In pursuance of the further 'printing design,' of which the Bishop wrote to Sancroft in 1681, the East India Company addressed a despatch to the Madras Council on February 20, 1695-6. 'We have caused the Liturgy of the Church of England with the Psalms of David to be translated into the Portugueses for the use and benefit of the Portuguese Inhabitants under our Government in India, which we caused to be printed at Oxford.' One hundred copies accompanied the despatch; a Portuguese version of the Gospel seems to have been sent out at an earlier date.

By that time the failure to reach the Indians through the medium of Arabic types and the Malay language was recognised, and the scheme had shaped itself into a mission to the few natives who spoke the Indo-Portuguese patois. On February 18, 1690-1, the Court of Directors urged the Madras authorities to build a church 'for the Protestant black people and Portuges and the Slaves' to prevent them going to the Popish chapels. They forwarded a draft translation of the Anglican liturgy 'in the Portuguez dialect of India' for local revision. They also hoped to send 'by our ships that depart next winter some able Minister that can preach in the Portugall tongue, and also a Domine, as the Dutch call them, which, in the style of our Church, is a Deacon that can read out prayers in Portugueses.'

The second feature in Bishop Fell's plan was the training at Oxford of young men who should combine the work of chaplains to the Company with that of missionaries to the heathen. If the Bishop's conception could have been realised, Oxford would have become a centre for the propagation of the faith in the East. But for this also the resources of that day proved altogether inadequate. No instruction in divinity or in Arabic, which was practically all that Oxford could then give, would have enabled an Englishman to preach to the Indian races. It seems doubtful, indeed, whether this training branch of the

scheme was carried out. Bishop Fell died in 1686, almost before it could have borne its first fruits, and certainly before it could have had a fair trial. Dean Paget has kindly gone through the matriculation roll and Chapter books of Christ Church, but can find no trace of action in regard to such scholars. Nor have I come across any payments for their support in the East India Company's accounts. If there were any such young men at Oxford, they probably passed unnoticed among the poor scholars maintained by Fell himself and diverged into other studies after his death.

But although Bishop Fell was dead, the movement did not die with him. Among his dearest friends and most beloved pupils Humphrey Prideaux held the favoured place. Prideaux was admitted a student of Christ Church in 1669 when Dean Fell was in the prime of his university career. The young scholar took his degree of M.A. in 1675, the year that Fell became Bishop, and he remained at Christ Church until Fell's death in 1686. One of his first works was an edition of 'Lucius Florus' in collaboration with Dean Fell. The Dean's influence also guided Prideaux into the eastern studies which resulted in his 'Life of Mahomet'; and it is from the 'Life of Prideaux' that we gather some of the most interesting details of Fell's literary labours. From the first Prideaux was associated with Fell in his Indian missionary scheme. Indeed, he had warned Fell in 1676 of the failure of his Malayan version of the Gospels on the ground that that language 'is not the vulgar' in India. In the same year Fell described Prideaux to Evelyn 'as a young man most learned in antiquities.' On Fell's death, Prideaux became a champion of the missionary cause, and after a distinguished career died Dean of Norwich.

Another Oxford leader of the movement after Fell's death was William Lloyd, who held in succession three bishoprics. A contemporary of Fell in his undergraduate days, and a fellow resident with him at Oxford during at least nine years, Lloyd shared his taste for eastern studies, and in later life displayed a zeal for missions even more ardent than Fell's, if not under so wise control. A third Oxford man and contemporary of Fell's who took an active part was Nicholas Stratford, Bishop of Chester. Stratford spent nine years as Dean of St. Asaph



while Lloyd was Bishop of that see, and we shall find them closely united with Prideaux of Christ Church in the promotion of the scheme which Fell bequeathed.

Under the guidance of these Oxford leaders the project entered on new developments. Its missionary aspects, as distinguished from the training of the Company's chaplains for possible missionary work, grew more prominent. Nor were there wanting powerful members of the Company itself who, realising the failure of the chaplain missionary scheme, would gladly have seen agents deputed to exclusively mission work. The Court Books refer in 1689 to the engagement of two French ministers, who unfortunately deserted after receiving advances of pay.<sup>1</sup> Such ill-sustained efforts by no means satisfied the Oxford leaders of the movement, and some plain speaking passed between them.

'The case of the Indians under the English Government,' wrote Stratford, Bishop of Chester, in 1695, to Dr. Prideaux, who was stirring afresh in the matter, 'is sad, but that of our East India Company is doubtless much more deplorable. For they have some sort of excuse for their infidelity, and consequently their punishment will be the more easy; but these can pretend nothing for their wretched neglect and contempt of those poor souls . . . I think the method proposed for their conversion is very fit and proper, and I wish it were once put in practice. The great difficulty will be to find out men of zeal to set about the work.'<sup>2</sup> At the same time Lloyd, then Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, as the member of the trio most influential at Court, is pressing the scheme on the East India Company and has 'left it with my Lord of Canterbury that he might either show it or impart the contents to his Majesty.'<sup>3</sup> He regrets that Parliament was so taken up with the great Bribery Case,<sup>4</sup> that nothing could be done in that quarter at present.

Meanwhile Prideaux had seized the opportunity of Tenison's

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes* of December 9, 1689. India Office MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. xxiv. p. 17. Letter dated April 2, 1694, signed N. Cestriens.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 32. Letter to Dr. Humphrey Prideaux. Dated April 20, 1695, signed W. Coventry and Lichfield.

<sup>4</sup> *Rawlinson MSS.* A. 82. Bodleian Library.

promotion to the Primacy to address him in forcible words. He submitted a scheme to the Archbishop for bringing the Christian faith within the knowledge of the one million Indians who, as he estimated, were under British influence. He claimed that there should be 'a church and school for the benefit of the Indian inhabitants' in each of the Company's settlements.<sup>1</sup> He points out that the proper occasion to impose such a condition on the Company was the time of granting a new charter to them: an occasion which had been formerly allowed to slip, but which was presently to recur.

Influential members of both Houses were favourable to the cause, including about half the Bench of Bishops. Men interested in any particular movement are apt to overestimate its importance in determining national action. Of this particular movement it may be safely said that it represented a current of public opinion and was backed by a weight of official authority which could not fail to affect the Government deliberations then in progress regarding the India trade. The old Company and the Interlopers now about to be constituted into the new Company found their forces fairly balanced, and were anxious to secure the goodwill of the missionary party. The charter granted to the new East India Company in 1698 discloses the result. It provides that the Company shall maintain one minister in every garrison or superior factory in the East Indies, together with a place set apart for divine service only. All ministers within a year of their arrival shall learn the Portuguese language. They shall also apply themselves to acquire the vernacular tongue of the province to which they are appointed, so as to instruct the native servants and slaves of the Company in the Protestant religion. Among the first acts of the new Company was a request to the Archbishop of Canterbury to draw up prayers for their particular use. On December 15, 1698, they ordered a thousand copies to be printed of three devout supplications, 'one to be used at home, another in their factories abroad, and a third on board their ships.'

The extent to which the Bishops had become interested in

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Humphrey Prideaux to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated January 23, 1694-5. The subject occupies thirty-seven pages in 'Prideaux's Life,' London, 1748, pp. 151-88.

what may be called evangelical work appears from the signatures to the preamble of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, approved four months later in April 1699. Twelve prelates put their names to the first list ; our old acquaintances, Stratford, Bishop of Chester, and Lloyd, translated to the see of Worcester in 1700, signing next to each other. How deeply Oxford was concerned in this movement may be realised from the fact that, of the twelve Bishops who signed, ten were Oxford men and the other two had been incorporated at Oxford.

The charter of 1698 made provision for the religious instruction of the Indians in the Company's immediate service. But it fell far short of 'the conversion of the natives,' which the Bishop of Oxford aimed at in his original letter to Archbishop Sancroft in 1681, and which he and his successors in the movement had always on their minds. The truth is that neither the old Company, nor the new Company, nor the united Company which they presently formed, found it possible to establish a missionary agency. At that time the English in India were struggling for existence. In 1701 the bigot Emperor Aurangzeb issued a Proclamation ordering the arrest of the English in India, the seizure of their goods, and the confinement of their persons, although 'not to close imprisonment.' During the following years the British settlements that survived owed their safety to the maxim, which bitter experience had forced them to adopt, that 'A fort is better than an ambassador.'

But there was one corner at the southern extremity of India in which the experiment might be tried. A little strip of land, five miles long by three in breadth, had been obtained by the Danes in 1616 from the Hindu Raja of Tanjore. In this secluded settlement of Tranquebar, far removed from the storm which the Mughal Emperor let loose upon the north, two Lutheran missionaries arrived from Denmark in 1706. It is stated to be the first Protestant mission to the Indian continent, although the Dutch attempted evangelistic work in Ceylon as early as 1642. The isolation of Tranquebar, and the fact that its fifteen square miles were the actual property of the Danes, well secured by a Danish fort, rendered the experiment possible. Even under these favourable circumstances the difficulties proved

great. The Lutheran missionaries, although supported by the influence of the King of Denmark, could not work in harmony with their own Governor, who imprisoned their leader for four months, forbidding him pen and paper, or any communication with the outer world.

The English East India Company was quite willing to render friendly offices to the Tranquebar mission. Fell's scheme for the translation of the Gospels and the training of chaplains with a view to their conversion of the heathen had now developed into a fund 'For encouraging the Protestant missionaries and erecting charity schools in the East Indies.' An account, under this heading, and evidently belonging to the year 1710, contains the following entry: <sup>1</sup> 'Remitted hence in Bills of Exchange and foreign silver for the use of the missionaries, 80*l*.' The next item renders it probable that 'the missionaries' were Danes. This item, also for 80*l*., includes a collection for 'the missionaries at Tranquebar,' 'of catechetical and practical Tracts written by our own Bishops and eminent Divines, to be translated into such languages in India as shall render them most usefull to the Heathen in those parts.'

It was not alone in the translation of religious works, however, that Fell's original movement gave an impulse to subsequent developments. The same account shows that by far the larger proportion of the expenditure was still devoted to printing—that is, to the 'printing design' which Fell mentioned in his letter of August 6, 1681. It comprises 1,500 copies of St. Matthew's Gospel; a printing press with six hundredweight of types complete, 72*l*.; '100 rheams of paper,' 40*l*.; and 135*l*. 'to Mr. John [*i.e.* Jonas] Finck, the printer,' for provisions on his voyage and first year's salary. In 1711 the Company resolved that books for the Protestant missionaries should be sent out in their ships free.<sup>2</sup> Finck was a foreigner, and wrote an account of his voyage and capture by the French in 'High Dutch.'

<sup>1</sup> *Tanner MSS.*, vol. ccxc. p. 238. No date; but the year is fixed by the sailing of the *Jane Frigate*, which took out Finck and the printing-press referred to in the next paragraph. *India Office MSS. Wage-books and Consultations.*

<sup>2</sup> *Court Minutes* of November 30, 1711. *India Office MSS.*

The narrative may here fitly close. It suffices to show that during the careless days of Charles II. a movement emanated from Oxford, and specifically from Christ Church, for the spread of the faith in India. That the East India Company put itself at the head of the movement and undertook the management of the funds. That the movement did not end with the death of the Dean-Bishop, its originator, but was carried on by other men of Oxford and Christ Church, his friends and disciples. That, although some of its aims went beyond what was possible in those times, it exercised an influence alike on the action of the old Company and on the 'Godly charter' which in 1698 incorporated the new. That thirty years after the Bishop of Oxford addressed the East Indian Directors in 1681, a fund was still being administered on the lines which he had laid down, namely, missionary work, 'the erecting of free schools in India,' the translation of the Scriptures, and the 'printing design.' 'The terms on which the new Company was incorporated,' says the Madras official edition of the charters, were 'almost the same' as before, 'but with the addition of a provision for the maintenance of ministers and schoolmasters.' This addition was in a large measure due to the movement initiated by Bishop Fell, and continued by his Oxford friends and disciples.

When the curtain next rises on British missionary effort in India we find the position of the English and the Danish Companies reversed. Denmark well repaid the succour which England had sent to the Tranquebar mission at the beginning of the eighteenth century by carrying the first Baptist missionaries under the Danish flag to India in 1793, and sheltering them in the Danish settlement of Serampur. Those who marvel at the change should bear in mind that the British had by that time become the governing power in India, pledged to respect the right of their subjects to worship in their own way. If the East India Company had encouraged Christian missionaries in 1793, it could not have refused an equal liberty to the propaganda of Hinduism and Islam. But religious movements in India have always tended to develop into political revolution, and the Company did not, at that time, feel itself strong enough to face the risk.

Yet the missionary spirit which supplied the impelling power

to the Oxford movement of 1681, although it long remained in abeyance, was never quenched. The monument in St. Paul's to 'The First Protestant Bishop of India' (1814-1822) was erected by the two sister Societies whom we saw, on the first page of this article, continuing Bishop Fell's work at the beginning of the last century. Its marble group represents the prelate receiving an Indian man and woman into the Christian faith, and the native Church now forms an important branch of the episcopal duty in India. When the East India Company grew into the governing power it became obviously wrong for its chaplains, paid out of Hindu and Musalman taxes, to attempt to destroy the religions which form the most cherished possessions of the Indian races. But propagandist societies, supported by voluntary contributions, and unconnected with the State, sprang up under the equal protection afforded by the Company to every creed. These missionary bodies do what the old military chaplains, projected by Fell, could never have accomplished. They hold exactly the same status in the eye of the law as Hindu or Musalman propagandists.

The right now possessed by all sects and races in India, not only to enjoy their own faith, but also to actively spread it, is a right which could not have been conceived of in India two centuries ago, and which could not have been safely granted a hundred years later. Even now it is subject to the provisions of the Penal Code against wounding the religious feelings of others, applied impartially to Christian, Musalman, and Hindu. The free yet orderly exercise of this right of the hostile creeds in India to proselytize from each other forms one of the most striking testimonies, not only to the justice but also to the strength of British rule.

## VIII

### A PILGRIM SCHOLAR<sup>1</sup>

#### I

#### THE START

IN November 1824 a European descended from the inner Himalayas to the British outpost at Sabathu. He was poorly clad in a native dress, 'the coarse blanket of the country.' But he declared himself to be an Austrian subject; a student of languages who had spent the past five years in making his way, chiefly on foot, from Hungary to Central Asia. He desired the protection of the British Government to enable him to proceed into the unknown regions of Tibet; and he produced a letter of recommendation from the English explorer, Moorcroft, with whom he had passed five months in Kashmir.

Captain Kennedy, afterwards the chief founder of Simla, was then the political officer in charge of the Himalayan frontier Station. He civilly detained the stranger, half as prisoner, half as guest, until he could receive the orders of the Governor-General regarding him. After some characteristic caution, Lord Amherst granted the protection solicited and supported it by a stipend, modest in amount, but sufficient for the still more modest wants of the traveller. Armed with letters to the Himalayan Chiefs, and with a few hundred rupees in his scrip, the stranger re-entered the mountains. The next six years he spent, with an interval of some months, in exploring the archives of Buddhist monasteries in Tibet.

The poor scholar was Csoma de Körös, one of the great

<sup>1</sup> In *The Pioneer*, Allahabad, 1885.

original workers of our century. As a Hungarian student, before entering the University, he had vowed, together with two fellow-pupils, to penetrate Central Asia in search of the origin of his nation. Alone of the three, Csoma kept his word. The first thirty-five years of his life were passed in self-preparation in Europe for the task. The next twelve he spent as an humble foot traveller through Asia, or in studying amid cold, privation, and solitude, with Buddhist priests in Tibet. His remaining eleven years he devoted in India to publishing a part of the materials he had collected, and to constantly adding to them, with an unslakable thirst for learning.

The result of his life was to open up a vast new field to human inquiry. Csoma, single-handed, did more than the armies of Ochterlony, and not less than the diplomacy of Hodgson, to pierce the Himalayas, and to reveal to Europe what lay behind the mountain wall. He has suffered the fate allotted in this world to the pioneers of knowledge. Other men have entered on his labours. They have built their easy edifices from the materials which he with a life's toil amassed: the meaner translating sort, as usual, not fearing to patronise the dead master.

The fame of a solitary worker like Csoma de Körös is, in truth, a plant which grows not on mortal soil nor in broad rumour lies. A hundred years had elapsed from his birth before he found a biographer. To the scholars of this generation he has been a dim Transylvanian figure, lean and homeless among the Himalayas, but projecting a giant shadow from their heights across Central Asia. Last year, the centenary of his birth, his life was at length worthily written. Dr. Duka has brought to his task the enthusiasm of a compatriot, and a loving reverence which in this iron age of biography may well excuse some slightness in Oriental research. We purpose very briefly to sketch the life of noble self-devotion which Dr. Duka has so tenderly portrayed, to throw sidelights on certain episodes which he has left obscure, and to indicate Csoma's true position in Tibetan scholarship. The fame of Csoma de Körös should be dear to the English nation; for he was never tired of acknowledging that to English generosity he had owed the means of doing his life's work. It was an old Hungarian fund subscribed



in London during the reign of Queen Anne that defrayed his university education at Göttingen. It was English liberality in Persia and Ladakh which enabled him to prosecute his journey across Asia. During his long monastic studies in Tibet, and throughout his eleven years in India, he was supported by grants from the British Government. In the English language the grateful Hungarian published his works. He rests from his labours, on a spur of his beloved Himalayas, in an English graveyard.

Alexander Csoma was born in the picturesque village of Körös, in Transylvania, April 1784. His family, although poor, belonged to the Szeklers, or military nobles, who throughout many hundred years had held the south-eastern frontier of Hungary against the Turks. The Szeklers, whom Csoma loved to call the Siculian nation, were a warrior tribe of Huns, settled in Dacia since the fourth century A.D. During the Middle Ages they had formed the advanced guard of Christendom; and they still maintained something of their ancient tribal equality, the cultivators being also the owners of the soil. In Csoma's family the military instinct was curiously blended with a love of learning. One of his uncles was a distinguished professor; a cousin was a Protestant pastor; a nephew fell in the street-fighting of the War of Independence in 1849. The school-life of the poorer military nobles of Hungary in the last century was a hard one. Csoma obtained his education as a pupil-servant in the gymnasium or collegiate high-school of Nagy-Enyed; keeping the lecture rooms clean and tidy in return for his board. When he reached the higher classes he gave private lessons to the younger boys, and stored up his humble fees as the means of carrying on his further studies.

At the age of twenty-three Csoma completed his gymnasium course (1807), and was elected Lecturer of Poetry to the college, devoting part of his holidays also to private tuition. It was not till he reached his thirty-first year that he found leisure to pass his *examen rigorosum*, which qualified him to continue his studies at a foreign university. At the beginning of the previous century the Protestant college of Nagy-Enyed had been razed to the ground, and its students dispersed or slain, in the Hungarian Civil Wars of 1704. The tragedy had touched the

heart of the British nation. Eleven thousand pounds were subscribed under the auspices of the Archbishop of Canterbury, invested in Consols, and formed into a Hungarian fund, part of which survives to this day. The distressed collegiate town rose anew from its ruins; and in 1816 the managers of the old fund were able, after meeting all expenses, to found two travelling scholarships. Csoma de Körös was one of the first students who benefited by these bursaries. After passing his *rigorosum* in 1815 he proceeded to Germany. During the next three years, supported by one of the travelling scholarships from the English fund, and by a grant for twelve months of the *libera mensa regia* from the Hanover Government, he studied at the University of Göttingen. Having there learned English, and plunged into Arabic, he returned to his native country in 1818, a finished academician aged thirty-four.

Honours and emoluments awaited the returned scholar. A tutorship in a nobleman's family, a professorship in a public school, were immediately offered; while before him lay the assurance of a first-class chair in the college in which he had passed his youth, and whose fame as a seat of learning his uncle had helped to establish. To these tempting offers Csoma turned a deaf ear. When an humble pupil-servant in that college, he and two fellow-students had devoted themselves to the discovery of the origin of their race. His two comrades had forgotten their vow. To Csoma it became the object of his life. He had endured the long indigence of a poor student to the age of nearly thirty-five in qualifying himself for the task. He now turned from honours and emoluments among his admiring countrymen, to spend his remaining twenty-three years in this world as a poor wanderer in fulfilment of his vow.

His friends found that their affectionate pleadings only gave him sorrow. Amid the snows of February 1819 he left Transylvania on foot, to master the Slavonic language in Lower Hungary and Croatia. In November he set his face towards the East. His old professor, Hegedüs, relates how with an 'expression of joyful serenity which shone from his eyes,' Csoma came to bid him good-bye. They drank a farewell cup in old tokay. Next morning the younger scholar started, 'lightly clad, as if he intended merely taking a walk,' on his life's journey

through Asia. The professor went with him a little way ; then they parted in the fields ; the old master wistfully watching his pupil till he reached the bank of the Maros stream, which was to sever him from home and friends for ever. A certain Count, standing at his gate, saw the wayfarer pass by ' clad in a thin yellow nankin dress, with a stick in his hand and a small bundle.'

Csoma possessed, in addition to his academical equipment, several qualifications for his task. He had a sweet patience which silently won sympathy, and which endeared him in a special manner to his native teachers in India and Tibet. ' I include Csoma,' writes one who knew him from childhood, ' among those fortunate and rare individuals against whom nobody has ever had a grievance ; nor have I heard him make a complaint against others.' He could bear severe labour, mental and physical, without strain ; from his childhood he had been a great walker ; a stranger alike to artificial stimulants and to fatigue. The poor scholar was also an athletic young military noble ; and his firmly knit frame resisted during fifty-eight years every trial of exposure, bad food, and infectious disease.

Above all, Csoma had learned to do without money. In boyhood he had earned his own education ; his stipend at the university was fifteen pounds per annum. He now started on a five years' journey through Asia with a hardly saved hoard of twenty pounds. To this should be added a promise of ten pounds a year from a friendly Councillor. His admiring countrymen afterwards raised a fund for him ; but he returned the money untouched, to found a scholarship in his old school. Throughout his life he would have no private patron, and shrank from private help of any sort. When at the university, a friend who was leaving tried to make over to Csoma a few books, and indeed his college cap, as Csoma's was worn out. The poor student refused the gift, and the friend had to transfer the articles to him by sale for ten kreuzers, say eightpence. When snowed up in Tibet, with thirty sheep hung for winter consumption in the neighbouring monastery, Csoma could scarcely afford a scrap of the animal food which would have helped him to bear the rigour of the climate. In India we shall find him living like a native on boiled rice, but refusing pecuniary aid, unless it came from the public purse and for a

specified public purpose. Everywhere we shall see him 'poor, humbly clad, and reserved,' accomplishing great results with the smallest means; unconscious of any wants beyond the single coarse suit which he wore, and just enough of the cheapest native food to enable him to work on from day to day.

Against these qualifications for his task must be set one drawback. The task itself was an impossible one. The object of Csoma's life proved to be but a student's dream. He believed that the Hungarians of Europe were of the same family as the Hungars, Yungars or Yugars in Mongolia. To discover his distant kinsmen of Asia and the common home of the race was the subject of his boyish vow; it remained the central purpose of his mature years; it formed the theme of almost his last conversation before death. The English officer who noted down his sick-bed utterances states that Csoma summarised the grounds for believing that 'his native land was possessed by the original Huns, and his reasons for tracing them to Central or Eastern Asia.' 'All his hopes of attaining the object of the long and laborious search were centred in the discovery of the country of the Yugars.' Dr. Duka, with that biographical tenderness which we are told passeth the love of women, would conceal the visionary nature of Csoma's main object under a nimbus of his actual achievements. But the evidence on this subject, although it does not seem to have come before Dr. Duka, is categorical and complete. To quote only a single letter from Csoma's own hand, a letter which his biographer might surely have seen: 'Both to satisfy my own desire,' he wrote from Teheran, 'and to prove my gratitude and love to my nation, I have set off, and must search for the origin of my nation according to the lights which I have kindled in Germany; avoiding neither dangers which may perhaps occur, nor the distance I may have to travel.'

For this and other errors of his old-world philology Csoma needs no apologist. It was not till after he had left Europe that Bopp finally transferred the science of language from the basis of verbal resemblance to that of fundamental structure. Even now, when Aryan scholarship has for long rested on this firm foundation, the Turanian races, who formed the subject of Csoma's research, still remain the sport of conjecture or asser-

tion, according to the modesty or the temerity of the individual student. Vambéry places the two epoch-making settlements of the Hungarian people, first between the Ural Mountains and the Volga River, and then amid the Slav elements of Pannonia. But the linguistic tools which the Hungarian scholar of our day so dexterously wields were not in the hands of his earlier compatriot. It is Csoma's glory that, starting from one set of old errors, he arrived at quite a different set of new truths; that in pursuing a dream he accomplished a reality. He never forced his facts to fit his preconceptions. His honesty in work overcame his fallacies of theory. A very few thinkers in this world have seen a great thing to do, seen it and done it. England has produced two such original workers, Newton and Darwin; for Bacon's performance was different. Csoma, like Browning's Grammarian, with a great end to pursue, died ere he knew it. His search for the home of his race in Asia was predestined to failure. But by his self-denying labours, during the long disappointment of that search, he laid the foundation for a new department of human knowledge.

## II

## THE JOURNEY

IN November 1819 Csoma de Körös crossed the hill frontier of Hungary, with intent to enter Asia by way of Constantinople. The plague in the Turkish capital forced him, however, to turn aside. He therefore took shipping from the European coast of the Archipelago and sailed by Rhodes to Egypt. At Alexandria he devoted himself to Arabic, but another outburst of the plague drove him eastward to Aleppo in Syria. Thence he walked to Mesopotamia dressed like an Asiatic, and floated down the Tigris on a raft to Bagdad. A small gift of money from the English resident in that city enabled him to go forward with a caravan to Persia. He reached the Persian capital, Teheran, in October 1820 after twelve months' march from the Hungarian frontier.

A year had already been consumed on the road, yet Csoma was still far to the west of the countries which he believed to contain the object of his search. His money was quite gone; and to add to his helplessness, no Europeans were at that season of the year in Teheran. A native servant of the British Embassy received him, however, with kindness and wrote of his forlorn condition to Sir Henry and Major George Willock, two Madras Cavalry officers who had been attached to Sir Gore Ouseley's mission. These distinguished brothers, the uncle and the father of the Bengal Cavalry officer of our day,<sup>1</sup> promptly

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Willock, K.L.S., was for eleven years *chargé d'affaires* at Teheran, and was the last chairman of the H.E.I. Company. His brother, Major George Willock, was an excellent Persian scholar, and served his country with credit in the East. A second brother, alluded to in the text, was Captain F. G. Willock, of the 6th Bengal Cavalry, who met a soldier's death during the siege of Delhi. Sir Henry's son, Mr. H. D. Willock, B.C.S.,

responded to the appeal. They supplied the poor traveller with money, clothes, and books, and Csoma rested four months under their protection, improving his English and perfecting himself in the Persian tongue. In March 1821 he writes, 'I bid adieu to my noble benefactors.' He resumed his Asiatic name, Sikandar Beg, 'Gentleman Alexander,' and again putting on a native dress he set his face towards Mongolia. He left with the brothers Willock all his humble properties, his University certificates, his passport, his few papers, and his European suit, with a request that they might be sent to his family 'in case I should die or perish on my road to Bokhara.' After traversing deserts, mountains, and steppes, he reached Bokhara only to find his further advance to the east blocked by the rumoured approach of a Russian army. He accordingly turned southwards, and, marching with a caravan, arrived at Kabul in January 1822.

More than two years had now passed on the journey. But Kabul proved to be a perilous resting place, and Sikandar Beg pushed on for the Sikh kingdom in the Punjab, meeting with Ranjit Singh's famous European generals Allard and Ventura, by the way. At the Sikh capital, Lahore, he found himself far to the south of the Mongolian countries, with the Himalayan wall now between him and the object of his search. By June 1822, however, he had made his way through the mountains to the capital of Ladakh. But here again he discovered that further progress eastwards was impossible. He therefore retraced his weary steps towards the Punjab, resolved to seek for some other passage through the Himalayas into Central Asia. Near the Kashmir frontier he met the English explorer Moorcroft. The two solitary Europeans in that wild region joined company and became friends. Csoma opened his sad heart and unfolded his baffled plans. Moorcroft advised him to learn Tibetan as the best groundwork for future success, and gave him his copy of Father Giorgi's 'Alphabetum Tibetanum.' That poor, voluminous compilation, printed at Rome in 1762 from materials sent home by the Capuchin friars, was then the only attempt to open up the language of Tibet to European research.

accompanied Havelock's force which relieved Lucknow, took part in every action, and remained with the Residency garrison until the second relief by Sir Colin Campbell.

With the study of this volume, however, Csoma's enterprise for the first time touched solid ground. He spent the winter of 1822 in Kashmir poring over its pages. Before the spring of 1823 a resolve had grown up within him that he would master, if he died for it, the new realms of learning of which he caught distant glimpses in Giorgi's work. He eked out its uncertain materials by conversing in Persian with a Tibetan resident in Kashmir. But the grammar and literature of Tibet could only be mastered in Tibet itself. Csoma determined to penetrate that unknown land. Moorcroft furnished him with letters and some rupees. The Hungarian, on his side, pledged himself to bring back results that would repay the outlay, and the two friends parted in Kashmir, never again to meet in this world. The solitary scholar plunged into the north-eastern mountains. From June 1823 to October 1824 he studied Tibetan with a learned priest, or Lama, in the Buddhist monastery of Yangla.

During half the year the cold at that altitude is intense. Even on midsummer day snow had fallen, and the ground was again sheeted with white before the crops were cut in September. In winter the doors were blocked with snow, and the thermometer ranged below zero. Throughout four months Csoma sat with his Lama in a cell nine feet square, neither of them daring to stir out, with no fire, with no light after dark, with only the ground to sleep on, and the bare walls of the building as their sole defence against the deadly cold. Wrapped in a sheepskin cloak, his arms folded tightly across his breast to keep in the last sparks of his animal heat, Csoma read from daybreak to dark, and then relapsed into night for the next fourteen hours. To put forth his hand for a moment from its fleecy shelter was an enterprise of pain and of danger. But before the end of winter he grew quite dexterous in turning over his pages, without getting his forefinger frostbitten.

Of his sufferings Csoma could never be got to speak one word. His reticence as to the hairbreadth escapes and personal privations of his long solitude in Central Asia contrasts with the picturesque frankness of his compatriot Vambéry. Of this period of his life he merely says: 'I became acquainted with many literary treasures, shut up in 320 printed volumes which



are the basis of all Tibetan learning and religion.' In November 1824 he descended the Sutlej gorge, emerging from the Himalayas at the British hill-cantonment of Sabathu, with an epitome of the 320 volumes and the beginnings of a Tibetan dictionary in his bundle.

The apparition of a European, known to the natives as Sikandar Beg and clad in a blanket, issuing forth from the Himalayas, was without precedent in the respectable routine of our frontier station. The officer in charge hospitably detained the pilgrim, and put on him English clothes, but at the same time wrote for orders regarding his disposal. The Governor-General briefly commanded that the stranger should give an account of himself. This Csoma did, in two letters of a simplicity so touching, and with a singleness of purpose so manifest, as to establish himself once and for ever in the confidence of the Indian Government. He only desired to continue his studies, and if the British nation would be pleased to help him, all the results should belong to it. Lord Amherst accepted the proposal, granted an allowance of fifty rupees a month to the scholar, and had him furnished with letters to the Chiefs on the Tibetan Frontier. Before setting out again, Csoma put on record in May 1825 precisely what he undertook to do. Until he could fulfil his obligations to the Indian Government, he silently gave up his search for the origin of his nation in Mongolia. He agreed to return to Tibet, and to remain there till he had collected the materials for three great works. First, a Tibetan grammar; second, a Tibetan-English dictionary of over 30,000 words; third, an account of Tibetan literature, with specimens of its books, and a succinct history of the country. When he should have gathered his materials in Tibet, he prayed that the Governor-General would permit him to journey to Calcutta, to submit the results to the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Henceforward this became the practical programme of Csoma's life. He never, indeed, abandoned the hope of resuming his search for the Mongolian starting-point of his race. That was to be his crowning achievement. But he never permitted this dream to interfere with the work which he had taken public money for doing. On the one hand, writes the

Englishman who, as we shall see, visited him in his final monastic retreat, 'his great aim and unceasing anxiety is to get access to Mongolia.' On the other hand, says the same witness, 'he told me with a melancholy emphasis that, on his delivering up the grammar and dictionary of the Tibetan language, and other illustrations of the literature of that country, he would be the happiest man on earth, AND COULD DIE WITH PLEASURE ON REDEEMING HIS PLEDGE.' The capitals are not ours. He deemed it an honour that he had everywhere in Asia won the trust of Englishmen; and he regarded the help which he had received on his journey, not as pecuniary favours, but as free gifts towards the execution of a great work. 'There is yet in Asia,' he wrote in his first letter to the Indian Government, 'a vast *terra incognita* of oriental learning.' 'In the last four years of my travelling in Asia, I have depended for my necessary subsistence entirely upon British generosity.' It was with a proud resolve that that generosity should never be repented of, that he stated the exact work which he purposed to give in return, and re-entered the mountains to accomplish it.

But while Csoma carried back to Tibet a very grateful heart to the Government and to individual Englishmen, his feelings towards the little Anglo-Indian society in which he had found himself were different. On his travels through Asia he had met with distinguished Indian officers, the Willock brothers and Moorcroft, men engaged on serious and perilous work. The life of the poor little dining and dancing hill-station of Sabathu, the miniature Masuri of those days, appeared to him altogether distasteful. The well-intentioned officer at the head of it (his name still survives in 'Kennedy' House at Simla) officially described him as 'this learned and enterprising individual.' But the 'learned and enterprising individual' had the blood of a military noble in his veins; and it is difficult to say whether he was more pained by the uncongenial indifference to his pursuits, or by the fitful attentions to his person, as a pet *protégé* of the Governor-General. Csoma, nourishing his great desire 'to enter into the cabinet of curiosity of remote ages,' and a master of ten languages, found himself tongue-tied during his six weary months of waiting at Sabathu. Any momentary outflashing of his true nature was taken as self-assertion, and

promptly snuffed out by the gossip of the last flirtation or the odds of the current cricket-match. The only bitter words which he is known to have ever uttered in his life referred to this period; when he was 'treated at Sabathu like a fool, caressed and ridiculed at the same time.'

Indian station-life seldom, indeed, seems to have commended itself to the occasional man of genius who has passed this way. From time to time a commercial traveller of literature comes round, and on returning to his native land puffs the houses along the road at which he has been flattered and fed free of charge. But at the hands of men of letters of the higher sort, our artless Anglo-Indian Society has suffered many things; from the bludgeon satire of Sir Philip Francis in the last century, and the rapier ridicule of Jacquemont early in the present one, to the sarcasms of Macaulay, with his recollections of our Indian dinner-parties as combining the dulness of a State banquet and the confusion of a shilling ordinary. On the one hand, the distinguished stranger finds the subjects, on which he has been listened to with admiration in other countries, of no conversational interest here. On the other hand, our innocent chatter seems to him a jargon, made up of the dialect of the playing-fields and the technical terms of the native land revenue office. We speak, of course, of the time before the great improvement which has of late years taken place in refined Anglo-Indian converse. For now, although bisques, and byes, and ties, and off-sides, and half-backs, enter more largely into our table-talk; yet native terms, or any expressions implying an interest in the country, are genteelly excluded. As we grow older we grow simpler. The vernaculars of our school sports resurge as the polite conversation of our riper years. The old words revive the old emotions, and we experience all the pangs and pleasures of fifteen at forty-five played over again. Meanwhile the employment of native words, which so strongly flavoured the talk of our predecessors, has become as discreditable as profane swearing. If a guest were to speak of a *jama-wasil-baki* at a dinner-table he would be stared at, amid a solemn hush, as if he were using bad words; and even our familiar friend, the *bandobast*, has been exiled to bachelor parties in remote stations.

Csoma was of too gentle and grateful a nature to indulge in satire on his benefactors. The futilities of the little hill-station struck him with a pained surprise rather than with resentment. His six months of waiting for orders at Sabathu were a period of suppression and silence. In his later Calcutta years, while the honoured friend of the Englishmen best worth knowing in India, and a most interesting companion to those who sought him out, he absolutely refused to go into society, as a thing not tending to profit a man who has a serious aim in life.

In June 1825 Csoma started on foot on his second ascent into Tibet. His first stages carried him up the spur of the Himalayas, which forms the watershed between the river systems of the Indus and the Ganges. Climbing by sheep tracks through heavy forest, and along the ledges of precipitous mountains, he reached a narrow ridge called Semla or Simla; 'a mere halting place, a name given to a few miserable cultivators' huts.' From the Simla ridge, then at places only two or three yards broad, the rain which falls on the western side flows towards the Arabian Sea, while that which drops on the eastern slope starts for the Bay of Bengal. The upper end of that neck of land is now crowned by an English church; a Gothic town hall has risen from its eastern edge; while around, above and below, is dotted the summer capital of India. Csoma made his way painfully into the interior, by much the same route as parties of tourists now canter gaily from stage-house to stage-house out to Narkanda. From this dominating *colle* he dropped by way of Kotgarh into the Sutlej Valley. Kotgarh, now a missionary station with an old graveyard smothered under roses, then formed the outermost defence-work of British India. Two detachments, raised from the shattered Gurkha armies whom we had lately expelled, controlled from Kotgarh the upper crossings of the Sutlej and the hill chiefs. Here Csoma bade adieu to European faces; and plunging into the gloomy Sutlej gorge, disappeared for the next eighteen months. In August 1825 he reached the village of his former friend and teacher the Buddhist priest, in the province of Zanskar.

That spiritual person was, however, 'absent on some mercantile affairs in the deserts of Tibet.' 'On his return,' continues Csoma, 'he has engaged to dwell and labour with

me from November 10 to the summer solstice of next year.' 'Medicine, astronomy, and astrology are his professions. In searching after knowledge he visited in six years many parts of Tibet, &c., and Nepal. He knows the whole system of their religion, has a general knowledge of everything that is contained in their books; and of customs, manners, economy; of the polite language used among the nobility and in the sacred volumes; and of speaking respectfully to superiors.' This accomplished ecclesiastic combined, indeed, many avocations. He was fifty-two years of age, had married the widow of the local Raja, was the chief physician in the great province of Ladakh, and on occasion served as Chief Secretary to that Government in communicating with the Grand Lama of Tibet. He had a sincere love for Csoma, but in time his affection was worn out by the Hungarian's insatiable demands for new knowledge. He took effectual precaution, indeed, against being again frozen up for four months with his pupil in a nine-foot square cell by providing an apartment in his own house. Many thousand words he patiently wrote down in Tibetan for the stranger, with a register of all the gods, heroes, constellations, minerals, animals, and plants; from the cedar-tree which groweth on the Himalayas, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall. But by degrees the learned Lama waxed faint over their labours, and after some months he quietly left his pupil. No other teacher could be found in that wild country: and nothing remained but for Csoma to return to India with his work unaccomplished.

One more frustration was thus added to this life of disappointed hopes. But although defeated, Csoma did not despair. In January 1827 he re-appeared at our frontier station no longer with a few copied manuscripts in his bundle, but with boxes laden with literary treasures. The Government had now to decide whether it would rest content with his half-finished work, or enable him to complete it. Lord Amherst resolved to trust the baffled scholar to the end.

## III

## THE END

IN the spring of 1827 Csoma was introduced to Lord Amherst. That nobleman saw nothing ridiculous in the extreme simplicity of dress and diet which moved the mirth of meaner spirits. He perceived that Csoma was one of those rare natures whose whole existence is centred in the achievement of a great work, and to whom it is a mere accident whether they accomplish it amid wealth and comfort or in isolation and want. The poor scholar admitted the failure of his second visit to Tibet. He offered either to proceed to Calcutta, to work up such materials as he had been able to collect, or to return to the mountains for three years more to complete them. His one fear was that he might exhaust the generosity of the British Government before his task was finished. He had, therefore, husbanded his resources so well, that out of Rs. 500 granted to him more than two years previously about Rs. 150 remained. He had, in fact, lived in one of the most rigorous climates in the world, and collected a vast treasure of Tibetan manuscripts, on a total expenditure of Rs. 15 a month, or, say, seven shillings a week.

To the Government of India the question was complicated by considerations with which his biographer seems unacquainted. Dr. Duka writes as if Giorgi's 'Alphabetum Tibetanum' of 1762, supplemented by certain doubtful efforts in India, remained in 1827 the sole source of information regarding the language of Tibet. This statement represents the facts with a fair degree of accuracy at the period of Csoma's first arrival in India in 1824. But during the three years which had since elapsed an important advance had been made; and in 1826 a Tibetan Dictionary, compiled independently of Csoma, was printed at

Serampur. The work was derived from lists of words left behind by a Catholic missionary on the Bhutan frontier. The poor missionary had died, his very name was lost, but his few worldly possessions fell into the hands of an English officer, who passed them on to another missionary in Bengal. From these papers, rich in vernacular terms and in the language of popular Tibetan literature, but unsifted and unsorted, and without any Tibetan scholar to edit them or to correct the proofs, a Dictionary had been printed at the expense of the East India Company in 1826. When, therefore, Csoma returned to India in 1827, declaring that he had failed to complete his work, he found that that work had just been done by others.

Lord Amherst had to decide whether he would pay for the cost of doing it over again. European scholars had pronounced against such efforts, initiated from the south of the Himalayas. Klaproth in particular had put forth his great authority to cast contempt on the endeavours of the English in India to study Tibetan. To send forth Csoma again was, therefore, not only to incur the expense of doing work twice over in India, but also to run the risk of a double share of ridicule in Europe. Lord Amherst realised, however, that here was a man capable of doing a great work for the British nation. After six months of waiting, Csoma received the sanction of the Government of India to return to Tibet, with an allowance of Rs. 50 per mensem during the three years which he required for the completion of his materials. Accordingly for the third time he re-ascended the Himalayas, penetrating by way of Simla, where a few wood houses had by this time been erected, into the wilds of Kunawar.

He reached the monastery of Kanum about the autumnal equinox of 1827, and passed the next three years, 9,500 feet above sea-level, in silence and solitude, completing his task. Only once was his isolation broken. Dr. Gerard, the earliest medical explorer of the Himalayas, visited him in 1829, and has left a pathetic picture of the life of the hermit scholar. The cold and privation of which Csoma never deigned to speak became terrible realities in Dr. Gerard's letter. We learn, too, that Csoma, in addition to his physical sufferings, had to

wrestle with those spiritual demons of self-distrust, the bitter sense of the world's neglect, and the paralyzing uncertainty as to the value of his labours, which have eaten the heart of the solitary worker in all ages and in all lands. Like Buddha he had to bear his Temptation in the Wilderness, alone and an hungered: but unlike Buddha, no angels came to comfort him after his struggles with the Doubting Enemy of mankind.

'The cold,' writes Dr. Gerard, 'is very intense; and all last winter he sat at his desk wrapped up in woollens from head to foot, and from morning to night, without an interval of recreation or warmth, except that of his frugal meals, which are one universal round of greasy tea.' Nevertheless the Hungarian had 'collected and arranged 40,000 words of the Tibetan language in a situation that would have driven most men to despair.' His Lama, or Buddhist priest and instructor, continues Dr. Gerard, 'is a man of vast acquirements, strangely disguised under modest confidence of superiority, the mildest and most unassuming address, and a countenance seldom disturbed by a smile. His learning has not made him bigoted or self-sufficient; but it is singularly contrasted with his person and appearance, which are humble, dignified, and greasy. Mr. Csoma himself appears, like one of the sages of antiquity, living in the most frugal manner and taking no interest in any object around him, except in his literary avocations; which, however, embrace the religions of the countries around him. In his conversations and expressions he is frequently disconsolate, and betrays it in involuntary sentiment, as if he thought himself forlorn and neglected. He can form no idea of the spirit in which Government will receive his works, and almost fears they may not be considered with that indulgence which is due to his research.'

But although at times feeling 'forlorn and neglected,' Csoma never lost the noble confidence in his work. If no angels came to comfort him in his conflict with self-distrust and Giant Despair, he had at length the encouragement in his loneliness of seeing his labours mentioned with honour in the 'Government Gazette.' A poor form of celestial consoler, perhaps; but the old Company had the grace to make one who was doing difficult and solitary work for it, feel that he was not forgotten. His 'whole earthly happiness,' says Dr. Gerard,



‘consists in being merely able to live and devote himself to mankind, with no other reward than a just appreciation and honest fame.’ To such a man what mattered it that of his fifty rupees a month one-half was paid to his Lama or teacher ; and that this, with other expenses, according to Gerard, ‘leaves him less than twenty rupees to provide the necessaries of life, which in that remote and secluded region are very expensive, and must frequently be supplied from a distance of two hundred miles. His chief and almost only meal is tea, in the Tartar fashion, which is indeed more like soup, the butter and salt mixed in its preparation leaving no flavour of tea. It is a repast at once greasy and nourishing, and being easily made, is very convenient in such a country.’ What mattered it, as we have mentioned, that in winter with ‘thirty whole sheep hung up for consumption’ in the monastery hard by, ‘poor Mr. Csoma can hardly afford to taste even a piece of one’? Or that in summer, with the cheap hill fruits in season, ‘he abstained from everything of this sort from a prudent conviction that they would not make him happier’? Dr. Gerard records, not without pathos, these and many other touching details. It formed a great event in the poor scholar’s life when he had saved up twelve rupees with which to build for himself a fireplace. But Csoma cared as little for all these things as for the bareness of his hut, without either table or bed. ‘Two rustic benches and a couple of ruder chairs,’ writes the sympathetic Gerard, ‘are all the furniture in his small abode. But the place looks comfortable, and the volumes of the Tibetan works, the “Kahgyur” and “Stangyur,” his manuscripts, and papers, are neatly piled up around him.’

Thus in penury and solitude Csoma accomplished his work. Any offer of private aid he quietly put aside. On leaving him, Dr. Gerard begged his acceptance ‘of a cloak which was well adapted for so cold a climate. I sent him also some rice and sugar, but he returned the whole, and out of his scanty resources sent me sixteen rupees to purchase a few articles at Sabathu. Mr. Csoma would accept of assistance only from a public source, because he seems confident of his ability to return a remunerating advantage ; but to private individuals, he says, he has nothing to give.’

Even the aid from public sources was on occasion so embittered by the remembrance of official pettiness and neglect that Csoma could not bring himself to accept it. A great literary enterprise, like Csoma's, is in India usually inaugurated by a Governor-General of large views, who clearly sees what the country and the British nation will in the end gain by it. But it is hateful to a certain type of official, especially to a second-rate specimen of the type, cramped by the long formalism of his life, and honestly unsympathetic to any work outside the circumvallations of routine which form the defence-works of his little bureaucratic citadel. Such animosity seldom affects the main results, if the worker has learned to keep his temper and to suffer fools. Indeed, be it said to the honour of the Government of India that no real worker has every looked back on a great literary enterprise conducted under its orders without acknowledging that its conduct has been, if not sympathetic in manner, yet in essentials just. This feeling was always uppermost in Csoma's mind. He found, too, that the narrow second-rate official is not the only official in India, nor in the long run the predominant one. From the men who really made the history of that day, whether Governor-Generals like Lord Amherst and Lord William Bentinck, or civilians like Metcalfe, Trevelyan, and Prinsep, the poor scholar always received the most delicate regard and kindness. His annoyance from the meaner sort of secretaries was merely the stone-throwing of street boys. The routine official could enforce his general rules in such a way as to inflict a good deal of pain on the solitary worker. But the petty affronts and smarts which a man thus endures in carrying out a great work are no more worth remembering than scratches received in a battle.

Csoma felt them, however, with the acuteness of a sensitive nature, although he seldom condescended to complain. For example, the routine gentlemen had the art of twice making him wait six months for an answer. They had also the triumph of keeping him very poor; always a comforting reflection to the ignoble order of mind which estimates a man's position by his pay-abstract. Csoma seems to have regretted this circumstance, only inasmuch as it disabled him from buying manuscripts. 'If,' wrote Dr. Gerard, 'means could be devised to increase his

small allowance even to 100 rupees a month, it would be liberality well conferred, and must eventually be well repaid.' They could also starve him in regard to books. This was the one affront which Csoma never forgot, and could not forgive. It was for books that Csoma first asked on his arrival in India. Yet the Government never supplied him with books or with the means of buying them; while the Asiatic Society, who might well have supplemented the action of Government, delayed during six years to answer his appeal. When at length, stirred by certain nobler spirits, the Society resolved to add fifty rupees a month to the stipend of fifty granted by Government, Csoma refused the tardy aid. He had by that time got beyond the help of books, for he knew more than books could teach him. 'I beg leave,' he wrote in his quaint English to the Society in 1829, 'for declining to accept the offered allowance and of returning the draft. In 1823, being destitute of books, Mr. Moorcroft, on my behalf, had requested you to send me some necessary works. I have never received any. I was neglected for six years. Now, under such circumstances and prospects, I shall want no books.'

For now the first part of his task was done. He had surveyed the whole domain of Tibetan classical literature. That literature is arranged in two great collections: the 'Kahgyur' in 104 folio volumes of 500 to 700 pages each, comprising 1083 distinct works, chiefly ethical; and the 'Stangyur,' a still more colossal encyclopædia of science in 225 folios, each weighing about five pounds. A single copy of the 'Kahgyur' sells in Central Asia for 7,000 oxen, and its cost of production at Peking is officially estimated at 600*l.* sterling. In the monastery at which Csoma worked these vast compilations were arranged 'in chests or cisterns standing on end and partitioned into cells, each containing a volume which is carefully wrapped within many folds, laced with cord, and bound tightly between boards of cypress or cedar.' In 1831, after eight years' study of Tibetan, Csoma returned to India with a train of coolies bearing his manuscripts; and on arriving in Calcutta 'placed all the literary treasures in his possession at the disposal of the authorities.'

Csoma's first friend, Lord Amherst, had left India; but he

had been succeeded by a statesman even greater in peace than Lord Amherst had been memorable in war. From the rule of Lord William Bentinck, the policy of governing India with a single eye to the benefit of the people dates. 'He abolished cruel rites,' says Macaulay on his monument, 'he effaced humiliating distinctions, he gave liberty to the expression of public opinion.' But the abolition of *Thagi*, the suppression of *Sati*, the initiation of popular instruction, the enfranchisement of the Press, and the protection of Mysore, were only a part of the debt which India owes to Lord William Bentinck. He diligently searched out the best men for every department, and trained up a school of Indian administrators who converted his beneficent personal principles into a permanent State policy. Before 1831 when Csoma reached Calcutta, the Governor-General had already begun to surround himself with men, almost every one of whom has written his name in bright letters on Indian history. Personal contact with such men at once put an end to Csoma's vexations. His stipend was promptly doubled, then quadrupled; although the original rate was more than Csoma could spend, and as much as, for some time, he would consent to draw. A room was provided for him in the Asiatic Society's house, with a noble library under the same roof, and appliances for undisturbed research exceeding the dreams, and indeed the wishes, of the scholar. Five thousand rupees were sanctioned for printing his work; and when the publishers' bills came to Rs. 6,412, they were passed without making the author feel as if he were a public malefactor.

In January 1834 his Dictionary and Grammar of the Tibetan language were published. In the preface Csoma describes himself as 'only a poor student.' But these two books have proved to be one of the most valuable and most enduring contributions which the Indian Government has made to human knowledge. 'They are,' says the learned Jäschke, who in our own day placed the cope-stone on the edifice of which Csoma laid the foundation, 'the work of an original investigator and the fruit of almost unparalleled determination and patience.' The studies of Csoma's biographer do not appear to have led him into the Tibetan by-path of Oriental

research. He seems to regard Csoma's work as a solitary structure, and there is a want of perspective throughout his narrative which prevents us from estimating the true magnitude of the edifice by comparing it with the labours of other scholars. Csoma's real achievement was this. In place of the old-world medley of Giorgi, and the vocabulary published at Serampur in 1826, from the copious but unsifted materials left behind by the poor Catholic missionary who died on the Bhutan frontier, Csoma substituted a new and an original work. He explored for himself the vast storehouses of classical Tibetan, and reduced the language to a Dictionary and Grammar, which made it the common property of the world.

Since Csoma no great original worker has arisen in the same field till within quite recent years. The St. Petersburg Lexicon is little more than an adaptation of the Serampur Dictionary of 1826, and of Csoma's Dictionary of 1834. The translator, while almost entirely dependent on these two works, has nevertheless ventured to condemn the former in terms which excite indignation, and to patronise the latter with an air of superiority which moves mirth. Csoma stands in need of no such impertinent secondhand eulogies. The real element of incompleteness in his books, apart from defects of method, is due to his having worked too exclusively from the Tibetan classics, to the disregard of the modern literature and language. This imperfection has now been remedied by the labours of the Moravian missionary, Jäschke. To the British Government belongs the credit of carrying to completion the work which it commenced half a century ago. Jäschke's Tibetan Dictionary was published at the charge of the Secretary of State for India, in 1881.

Csoma's Dictionary and Grammar form, in the words on his tombstone, 'his best and real monument.' Of his lesser essays, numerous and valuable as they were, it is unnecessary to speak in detail. They amply redeemed Csoma's third promise, made in 1825, to furnish an account of Tibetan literature. They give a special interest to the Asiatic Society's Journal and Researches of that period. Some of them remain monographs on the subjects of which they treat; but Csoma's central work has enabled later scholars to advance beyond many of his minor contributions. In 1834 the Society elected him an honorary

member, at that time a very rare distinction, Sir Charles Trevelyan being his proposer and Prinsep his seconder. Csoma had for some time realised that without a knowledge of Sanskrit no further progress in philology could be made. From 1834 to 1837 he accordingly devoted himself to Sanskrit and its dialects; studying in Calcutta, or travelling by boat or on foot through North-Eastern Bengal. He declined the hospitality of British officers on his route, as it impeded his studies, and preferred to live in a hut on tea and boiled rice. His monthly expenses came to three rupees for a servant and four rupees for all other outlay; total, say, 3s. 3d. a week. The accumulated surplus of his stipend, together with 300 ducats presented to him from Hungary, he sent home to his relatives, and in aid of the Hungarian Literary Society.

In January 1837 he returned to Calcutta a competent Sanskrit scholar. The Asiatic Society appointed him their sub-librarian, and gave him quarters in their house. But his invincible simplicity of life and self-concentration in study remained unperturbed. A letter describes how, in the last stage of his life, Csoma arranged his four boxes of books around him, and sat, laboured, and slept on a mat within the little quadrangle which they formed. The work that he had undertaken for Government he had honourably accomplished. But he never forgot, as he says in the preface to his Dictionary, that 'the study of the Tibetan language did not form part of my original plan,' which was to search out 'the origin and language of the Hungarians' in Central Asia. During the next four years (from the end of 1837 to early in 1842) he silently girded himself for his final enterprise, meanwhile cataloguing manuscripts and doing much solid work for his employers.

'I saw him often during my stay in Calcutta,' says one distinguished visitor, 'absorbed in phantastic thoughts, smiling at the course of his own ideas, taciturn like the Brahmans, who, bending over their writing desks, are employed in copying texts of Sanskrit. His room had the appearance of a cell, which he never left, except for short walks in the corridors of the building.' Against the distinguished visitor, however, Csoma was apt to shut his heart and his door: in fact he kept his room locked from the outside, so that it could not be opened without

sending for the keys. To a sympathetic fellow-student Csoma was a different being. 'I found him,' says the learned Dr. Malan,<sup>1</sup> (may his memory long flourish at Broad Windsor,) 'a man of middle stature, much weather-beaten from his travels, but kind, amiable, and willing to impart all he knew.' With a compatriot who could talk of his beloved country, he warmed into a thousand reminiscences and a sweet grave mirth. 'He was cheerful,' writes a travelling artist from Pesth, 'often merry, his spirits rose very considerably when we took the opportunity of talking about Hungary. Often, when speaking of our native land, our conversation was protracted till after ten o'clock. I began to suspect, however, that he would never see his native land again, being then already advanced in age,' and enfeebled by his almost 'prison life.'

From this prison life, however, Csoma in due time soared free. By 1842 he felt himself fully equipped for the long-deferred enterprise of his life. He was then 58 years old, but, like the aged Ulysses, he could not rest from travel. Like Ulysses, too, 'he had become a name for always roaming with a hungry heart;' and though made weak by time and fate, yet strong in will, he resolved 'to follow knowledge like a sinking star.' His little quadrangle of book-boxes was his dukedom, in which he soberly worked and cautiously reasoned. But beyond this enclosure of real life ever arose visions of the cloud-capt towers and snowy realms of the Himalayas. In February 1842 he wrote a grateful letter of farewell to the Asiatic Society, thanking them for their long kindness, and saying that, as he was setting forth 'to make a tour in Central Asia,' and might perhaps not return, he left all his books, papers, and savings at their disposal. He travelled the four hundred miles to the mountains apparently on foot, was thus compelled to spend a night in the deadly Terai, and reached Darjiling on March 24 stricken with fever. Our Political Agent there, Archibald Campbell, was a skilled physician and an enthusiastic Oriental student. Every attention which medical science and admiring veneration could suggest was bestowed on the worn-out scholar. Dr. Campbell records how, in the intervals,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Malan, Oriental linguist and brilliant scholar, died at Bournemouth, 1894. (See Supplement to *Dictionary of National Biography*.)

of the fever, the patient would burst forth into brilliant anticipations of the work which he was now at last to accomplish. 'What would Hodgson, Turnour, and some of the philosophers of Europe not give to be in my place when I get to Lhassa!' was a frequent exclamation. The poor pilgrim was never to reach Lhassa. After three weeks' illness, he died very peacefully at daybreak on April 11, 1842, without a groan or a struggle.

'The effects,' wrote Dr. Campbell, 'consisted of four boxes of books and papers, the suit of blue clothes which he always wore and in which he died, a few sheets, and one cooking pot.' There were also a bag of silver coins and a waist-belt of gold ducats, and a memorandum of Government securities for five thousand rupees, which he had saved from his modest stipend. These went in due course to his beloved country; but Csoma's bequest to the world was of the kind which neither moth nor rust can corrupt. English officers laid the Master, 'famous calm and dead,' in a fitting spot. Not on any low-lying plain of India, but on a mighty slope of the Himalayas—'that appropriate country where man's thought, rarer, intenser, self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought, chafes in the censer'—they buried the pilgrim scholar. The Asiatic Society raised a pillar over his grave, with an error as to his age, but with a noble epitaph. The monument is now entered in the list of tombs of Great Men, which the British Government maintains for ever at the public charge. The little child of a Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal lies just behind. Csoma's grave looks southwards to India, where the true work of Csoma's life was finished: a shoulder of Birch Hill shuts out the snowy ranges beyond which lay the visionary search, which he was destined never to accomplish:

'Here's the top-peak; the multitude below  
 Live, for they can, there:  
 This man decided not to Live but Know—  
 Bury this man there?  
 Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,  
 Lightnings are loosened,  
 Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,  
 Peace let the dew send!  
 Lofty designs must close in like effects:  
 Loftily lying,  
 Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,  
 Living and dying.'



## In Memoriam

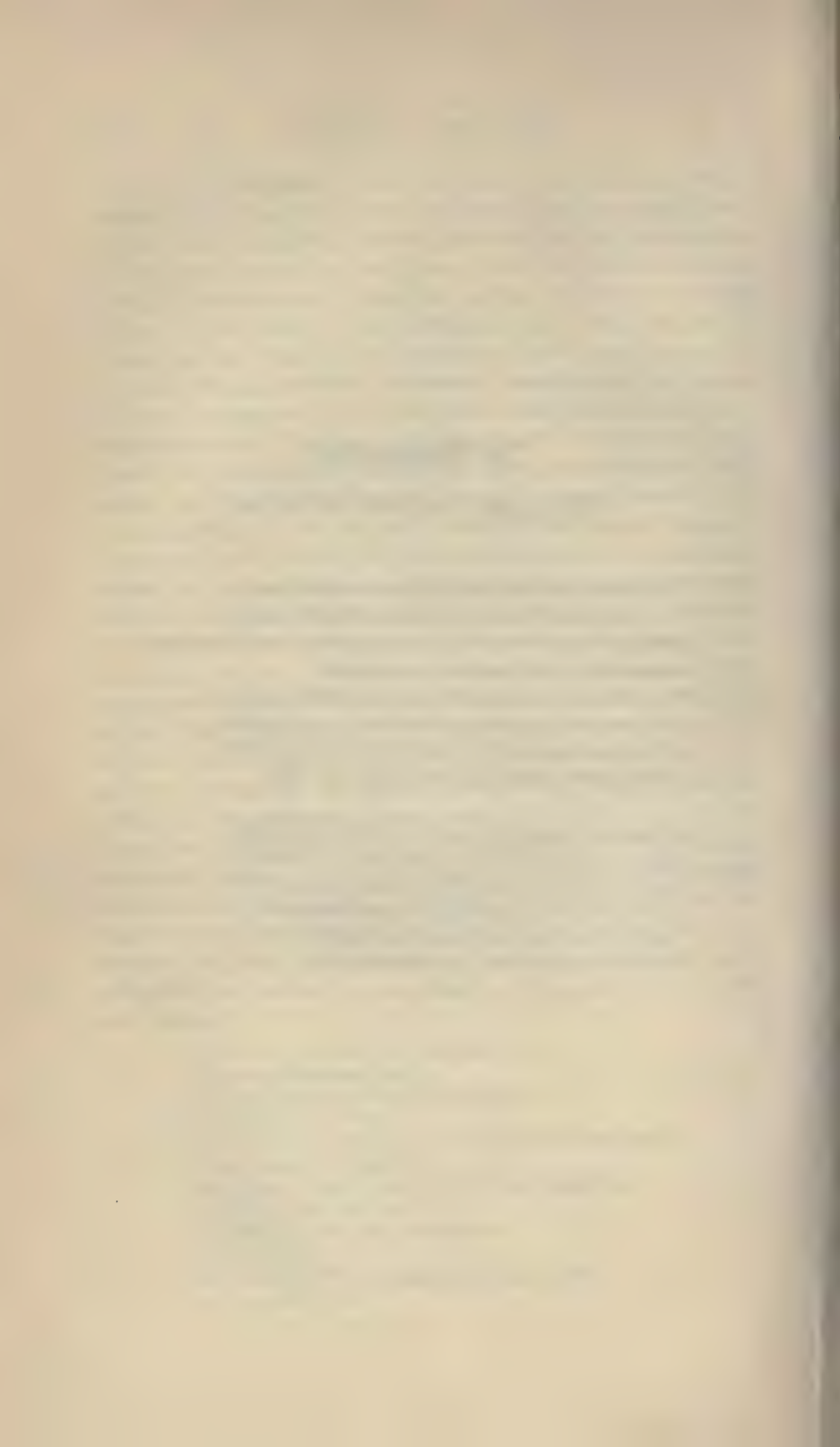
WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER

THE Orient touched him with her magic wand,  
She bade him labour in her boundless field ;  
Straight went he forth—he could not choose but yield—  
Submissive to her dominant command.

Then wrought with strenuous will, untiring hand,  
Till her fair features (in dark mists concealed),  
Her splendour, and her pathos flashed revealed  
By his transcendent life-work, nobly planned.

For him the peace, for those he loved the pain,  
Who yet shall surely see him (but not here !),  
Whose name is worthy of a worthier strain :  
Yet be it mine, who hold thy memory dear,  
To lay this frail song-violet on thy bier,  
Master, of genial heart and subtle brain.

C. A. K.



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